

RURAL ECONOMIC STRATEGIES KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON



THE MISSION

The mission of the Rural Economic Strategies is to advance the long term economic viability of the rural area, with an emphasis on local farming and forestry, consistent with the character of rural King County.



**Prepared by the King County
Office of Business Relations and Economic Development
December 2005**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The mission of the Rural Economic Strategies is to advance the long term economic viability of the people who live and work in the rural areas, while maintaining the unique character that is rural King County. This Report is the culmination of a comprehensive twelve-month public process involving rural residents, farmers, foresters, business owners, and rural stakeholder groups. The ideas, suggestions, and recommendations presented by rural stakeholders at public and stakeholder group meetings and through personal conversations, emails, letters, and phone calls, as well as their response to the Public Review Draft form the foundation for the Report. The amount of public involvement and the strength and enthusiasm of interest in a continuing dialogue has been remarkable. The strategies presented in this Report are based on their input. These strategies, together with specific action items, are intended to engage rural residents and stakeholders organizations in partnerships, projects, and programs to promote economic vitality. The partnerships and projects forged this year with the Vashon Forest Stewards, Puget Poultry of Washington, the City of Skykomish, and the Snoqualmie Valley Governments Association, to name a few, demonstrate the county's commitment to implementing the Strategies and Action Items.

Background

The rural unincorporated area of King County provides a diversity of lifestyle choices and employment opportunities for county residents, contains farms and forests that help sustain natural resource lands, and provides the basis for maintaining and expanding the urban / rural interface so important to all county residents. The preservation of these rural lands, so close to the major urban center of the Pacific Northwest creates fantastic opportunities for the urban / rural interface by providing programs, such as farmers markets that offer quality, fresh local produce. Along with preservation the challenge is to support the long term economic viability of those who work and live on these rural resource lands.

In King County, as well as the entire Puget Sound region, agriculture and forestry are in the midst of significant changes. Agriculture is moving away from the large dairy farms of the past to smaller farms growing a diversity of crops to meet changing market demands. Over the past few decades, the acreage in large private timber production has declined in the rural area and is now found only in the Forest Production District. Forestland in the rural area has been subdivided and sold as rural residential lots. Agriculture is slowly making a comeback in the county, with sales increasing from \$99 million in 1997 to \$120 million in 2002. With support, small-scale forestry may be able to see a similar increase. The King County Comprehensive Plan discusses in detail the importance of farm and forestlands to the County and establishes a number of policies to protect and enhance these land uses. The third natural resource sector in King County is mineral resources and mining and information on this sector is found in Chapter 4 of the Report.

Another important element of economic life in rural King County is home-based businesses upon which many rural residents rely for a living wage. The Comprehensive Plan recognizes the importance of home occupations, home industries, and other small businesses that provide services to rural residents and have long been part of the rural character in unincorporated King County (Policy R-106). In 2003 and 2004, several significant regulatory changes were made, in part to address Policy R-106. These changes dealt with increasing the diversity of products sold

in the rural area, eliminating barriers to business cooperatives, diversifying permitted economic activities, and reducing the burden of regulations on the agriculture and forestry economic clusters. These changes are detailed further in the Report, with additional discussion related to implementation of Policy R-106 in the Home-Based Business Economic Cluster section.

Another key to rural economic health are the commercial and industrial businesses found in the rural cities, towns, and neighborhood centers. These businesses provide retail shopping, services, and jobs for rural residents. The Comprehensive Plan recognizes the rural cities, unincorporated rural towns, and the small neighborhood centers as these entities “contribute to the variety in development patterns and housing choices and provide employment opportunities, retail shopping, and other services to nearby residents”

Comprehensive Plan Policy R-107 directs that the Rural Economic Strategies Report create partnerships and implement projects and programs that provide opportunities to enhance rural economic health while minimizing obstacles. This Report focuses on the six economic clusters critical to the long term economic viability of rural unincorporated King County. These economic clusters are agriculture, forestry, home-based business, tourism and recreation, the rural towns and commercial neighborhood centers, and the rural cities. This Report discusses each of these economic clusters and examines the market, infrastructure, and regulatory factors that drive the opportunities and / or raise constraints to the economic viability of the clusters. Comments received at the public and stakeholder meetings, and on the Public Review Draft Report, as well as input from rural residents, farmers, foresters, business persons, and rural stakeholder organizations form the basis for the Rural Economic Strategies and Action Items. The Strategies and Action Items have all been evaluated based on compliance with the Rural Economic Strategies mission, stated below, the King County Comprehensive Plan, and Countywide Planning Policies.

The Mission

The mission and guidance statements for the rural economic strategies are in Table 1: Rural Economic Strategies Mission.

Table 1: Rural Economic Strategies Mission

The mission of the Rural Economic Strategies is to advance the long term economic viability of the rural area, with an emphasis on local farming and forestry, consistent with the character of rural King County.

Based on input from the rural community, the Rural Economic Strategies:

- Recognize the opportunities, constraints, and role of small scale farming and forestry;
- Recognize the importance of home-based businesses for individuals and families living in the rural area;
- Encourage recreation and tourism opportunities suitable to the area in which proposed;
- Encourage businesses that support the rural economy to locate in existing rural cities, towns, and neighborhood centers; and
- Ensure the goals, policies, and implementation strategies are compatible with the lifestyles and character found in the distinct communities of rural King County.

Methodology

The King County Office of Economic Development and Business Relations, hereafter referred to as BRED, led the development of the Rural Economic Strategies. In cooperation with the Department of Development and Environmental Services, the Department of Natural Resources and Parks, the Department of Transportation, and the Executive's Office, BRED initiated conversations with rural residents and stakeholders to explore the opportunities and needs of the rural communities. An inventory of existing economic data on the rural area was compiled and is included in this Report.

The county held public meetings throughout rural King County to solicit comments and recommendations from rural residents and stakeholders. The county also met with many rural stakeholder groups, including the Agriculture Commission, the Rural Forestry Commission, the four rural Unincorporated Area Councils, the rural cities, chambers of commerce, and other rural organizations. The ideas, suggestions, and recommendations from the public meetings and stakeholder meetings form the basis of this Report. The strength and enthusiasm of this input led to the recommendation that development and implementation of the Rural Economic Strategies should continue into 2006 and beyond as a dynamic, evolving program that responds to the changing needs of the rural area. The Strategies and Action Items are intended to engage rural residents, stakeholders, and communities in partnerships, projects, and programs with the county which will allow the rural economy to prosper, without sacrificing the character or quality of life of rural King County.

Implementation

Implementation of this Report will include the continuation of several partnerships, projects, and programs that were initiated in 2005. Rural stakeholder groups such as the Agriculture and Rural Forestry Commissions recommended potential partnerships, projects, and programs that county staff explored. BRED and the county departments and divisions evaluated these opportunities and determined that several were too valuable to the rural area to wait until the Report was finished, thus implementation was initiated in 2005. The completed partnerships and projects are summarized below.

- **Get Fresh Week** – To support the State of Washington Farmers Market Week, Executive Sims declared Get Fresh Week in August with the Slogan: “The Time is Ripe to Eat Local.” BRED coordinated this effort with the KC Agriculture Program, Puget Sound Fresh, Cascade Harvest Coalition, the Executive's office, and other partners.
- **Harvest Celebration and Farm Tour** – BRED, in coordination with 4Culture helped sponsor this year's WSU Extension's Harvest Celebration and Farm Tour. Historic agricultural information was added to the tour guide and several agricultural heritage sites were added to the tours.
- **Skykomish Vision 2010 Plan** – BRED, at the invitation of the Mayor and Council of the Town of Skykomish, participated in the public meetings held this past spring and summer to develop a vision for Skykomish.
- **Vashon Forest Stewards** – BRED secured three cargo containers to serve as a lumber drying kiln and storage for equipment and tools. BRED also connected this group with the

Highline Community College Small Business Development Center to help develop business and marketing plans for their value-added wood products.

- **Infrastructure Improvement Application** – BRED coordinated and submitted a \$3 million infrastructure improvement grant to the federal Economic Development Administration on behalf of the cities of North Bend and Snoqualmie and the Snoqualmie Tribe. This application has passed the first recommendation threshold, and if funded, the collective projects would create over 2,000 new jobs for rural residents in the Snoqualmie Valley over the next eight years.

The county initiated implementation of several ongoing projects that will be continued in 2006.

- **Poultry Processing Facilities** – BRED and KC Agriculture Program are working with Puget Poultry of Washington to develop a USDA-inspected poultry processing facility. USDA certification will enable poultry growers throughout the county to increase their markets by selling products to supermarkets and restaurants. The facility will be able to process chickens, ducks, turkeys, and rabbits.
- **Farmer Chef Connection Conference** – Continue to support this inaugural conference that will bring farmers and local chefs together to network. The conference will be held in King County in February of 2006 and will encourage the use of local farm produce by area restaurants. The conference is being modeled after the successful farmer-chef conferences in Portland, Oregon. Partners include the county, Puget Sound Fresh, KC Washington State University Extension, Washington Department of Agriculture Small Farms Program, FORKS (the Seattle Chapter of the Chefs Collaborative), and others. Following completion and evaluation of the conference, the county may seek to establish it as an annual event.
- **Grass Fed Beef & Mobile Processing Unit** – In response to a growing demand for grass fed beef locally and the need to locally process that beef, BRED and the KC Agriculture Program are exploring market opportunities and potential partnerships for a USDA-inspected local processing facility, which would allow growers to sell to supermarkets and restaurants.
- **Small Farm Expo** – BRED is working with Green River Community College and other partners to add a business development track to this KC WSU Extension small rural landowner educational event, scheduled for March 2006.
- **Way Finding and Standardized Signage / Tourism Enhancement Program** – BRED, the KC Roads Division, KC Parks & Recreation Division, and 4Culture, in partnership with Snoqualmie Valley Governments Association, the State, and others are working to develop a pilot project for thematic and consistent signage for parks, historical, cultural, scenic, and other sites throughout the area to enhance the tourism market in the Snoqualmie Valley.

The county will begin implementation of the Strategies and Action Items contained in this Report in 2006. A summary of the Strategies and Action Items is included in the Executive Summary with specific details presented in Chapter 3.

To track implementation of the Strategies and Action Items in this Report, the Executive will provide an annual update to the County Council, which will be made available to the public. The Annual Report will provide an update on what was accomplished the previous year and set forth new and continuing partnerships, projects, and programs to be implemented the following year.

The success of the Rural Economic Strategies effort will be determined by the implementation of the Strategies and Action Items. The partnerships, projects, and programs presented above demonstrate the county's commitment to implementation of the Strategies.

List of the Rural Economic Strategies and Action Items

Below are the Strategies and Action Items that King County will implement. The Rural Economic Strategies are identified and numbered with an "RES" for Rural Economic Strategies, followed by a letter and number to identify the classification and economic cluster of each strategy:

- **RES-G#** –General Rural Economic Strategies
- **RES-A#** – Agriculture Cluster Economic Strategies
- **RES-F#** – Forestry Cluster Economic Strategies
- **RES-H#** – Home-Based Business Cluster Economic Strategies
- **RES-T#** – Tourism and Recreation Cluster Economic Strategies
- **RES-N#** – Rural Town and Neighborhood Centers Cluster Economic Strategies
- **RES-C#** – Rural Cities Cluster Economic Strategies

A. General Rural Economic Strategies

RES-G1 Inform and Communicate with Rural Residents and Businesses.

Action Item

- Rural Resources Website

RES-G2 Provide Rural Business Assistance.

Action Items

- Rural Permit Coordinator
- Rural Business Circuit Rider
- Coordination Among County Departments
- Rural Business Review

RES-G3 Create Partnerships with Rural Communities to Promote Economic Vitality.

Action Items

- Infrastructure Improvements
- Private Development Financing
- Community Partnerships
- Vashon-Maury Island Community Council

RES-G4 Create Partnerships with the Counties of the Puget Sound Region to Promote Economic Vitality.

Action Items

- Regional Partnerships

B. Agriculture Cluster Economic Strategies

RES-A1 Promote and Enhance Agriculture Production.

Action Items

- Agriculture Commission
- Agricultural Related Non-Profit Organizations

RES-A2 Promote Programs that Educate and Encourage Urban Residents and Businesses on the Importance of Buying Local Produce.

Action Items

- Urban / Rural Interface
- “Get Fresh Week”
- Harvest Celebration and Farm Tour
- Farmer Chef Connection Conference

RES-A3 Enhance the Agricultural Market and Economic Base.

Action Items

- Poultry Processing Facilities
- Grass Fed Beef & Mobile Processing Unit
- Farmers Markets
- Commercial Kitchen
- Drainage Options
- Agriculture Related Home-Based Business Regulations

RES-A4 Provide Business Assistance to the Agriculture Industry.

Action Items

- Small Farm Expo
- Agriculture Education Programs
- Cultivating Success
- Model Business Plans
- Livestock Industry

C. Forestry Cluster Economic Strategies

RES-F1 Promote and Enhance Forestry.

Action Items

- Rural Forest Commission
- Forestry Related Organizations
- Forest Stewardship
- Healthy Forestlands
- Forestry Web page

RES-F2 Enhance the Forestry Market and Economic Base.

Action Items

- Low Impact Infrastructure
- Green Building Certification
- Vashon Forest Stewards
- Forestry Training for Youth

RES-F3 Provide Business Assistance to Forest Landowners.

Action Items

- Forest Related Small Business Support
- Fire Management Plans
- Forest Enhancement Events
- Model Business Plans

D. Home-Based Business Cluster Economic Strategies

RES-H1 Promote and Encourage Compatible Home-Based Businesses.

Action Items

- Home-Based Business Regulatory Assistance
- Home-Based Business Regulations
- Home-Based Business Technical Assistance
- Web Connectivity
- Model Business Plans

E. Tourism and Recreation Cluster Economic Strategies

RES-T1 Promote and Enhance Compatible Tourism and Recreation.

Action Items

- Way Finding and Standardized Signage / Tourism Enhancement Program
- Farm / Habitat Tourism Model
- Historic Preservation Office Programs
- Parks and Recreation Division Programs

F. Rural Town and Commercial Neighborhood Economic Strategies

RES-N1 Promote and Support Compatible Businesses in the Rural Towns and Rural Neighborhoods.

Action Items

- Business Enhancement Partnerships
- Business Support
- Road, Sidewalk, and Appropriate Infrastructure Support
- Tourism Support

- Model Business Plans
- Rural General Stores

G. Rural Cities Cluster Economic Strategies

RES-C1 Create and Sustain Partnerships with the Rural Cities.

Action Items

- Partnerships with the Rural Cities
- Regional Rural City-Based Tourism Project
- Rural City Economic Development Plans
- Abandoned Mill Site Redevelopment Plans

RURAL ECONOMIC STRATEGIES REPORT

"We can all survive without another condominium, Taco Bell, or shopping center. Can we really survive without fertile soils, without fresh and unpoisoned food, without a place to teach our children about interconnections and context, or a place to gather on the land? ... We cannot all go back to the land, but we can provide something of the land to everyone."

*Michael Ableman, On Good Land,
The Autobiography of an Urban Farm*

Chapter 1: Introduction

A. Background and Creation of the Rural Economic Strategies

The momentum for creating the Rural Economic Strategies in November of 2004 probably had its start when the residents of King County came together in the 1970s to save the Pike Place Market, a long used testament to man's harvest of the land and the sea and his craftsmanship of our natural materials. Having successfully saved the Market, the residents, stakeholder organizations, and county continued over the next thirty years to take actions to ensure that much of the remaining fertile topsoil would be maintained. One of these actions to preserve the county's farmlands included passage of the Farmlands and Open Space Preservation Bond in 1979. This Bond raised \$50 million for the initial purchase of development rights in attempt to stop the rampant development of the rural area that occurred in the county during the 1940's and into the 1970's. During 1985 and 1986, development rights on 12,600 acres of land were purchased and a county staff person was hired to oversee this Farmlands Preservation Program and ensure adherence to the deed restrictions. Prior to that time, the only focus on farmland programs were the American Soil Conservation Service (now the Natural Resources Conservation Service) and the KC Washington State University Extension.

The State Growth Management Act (GMA), which was passed by the Washington State Legislature in 1990, requires, in part, the largest and fastest growing counties in the state to establish urban growth areas and to designate natural resource lands with long term commercial significance. The King County Comprehensive Plan developed in compliance with GMA was adopted in 1994. The 1994 Comprehensive Plan among many other actions did the following:

- Established the Urban Growth Area.
- Created the Agriculture Production Districts and Forest Production Districts.
- Classified significant land areas as Open Space / Recreation / Parks & Wilderness.
- Formed the Agriculture Commission.

The Farm and Forest Report, *A Strategy to Preserving the Working Landscapes of Rural King County* was developed by outside consultants and adopted by the King County Council in 1996. That report included extensive stakeholder input and has been used since that time to direct both the Agriculture and Forestry Programs of King County. Many of the existing King County programs described in the Agriculture and Forestry Economic Cluster Sections of this Report were originally proposed in the Farm and Forest Report.

These previous preservation and growth management efforts focused on land issues rather than the economics of the unincorporated area of the county or the economic viability of the residents and businesses of rural King County. Thus, in 2004 the King County Council adopted as part of the 2004 Comprehensive Plan Update, Policy R-107 which calls for the creation of the Rural Economic Strategies. The county recognizes that understanding the current economics of the unincorporated area and exploring the opportunities, challenges, and constraints facing the rural area today are significant components in preserving the rural land and its key uses, farming and forestry.

The King County Office of Economic Development and Business Relations, hereafter referred to as BRED, is leading this effort. The initial focus in developing the Strategies Report was to initiate conversations with rural residents and stakeholders, to explore the opportunities and needs of the rural area, and to inventory and evaluate the economic base of rural King County.

Rural residents, farmers, foresters, businesses and stakeholder groups, including the Agriculture Commission, the Rural Forestry Commission, the rural Unincorporated Area Councils, the rural cities, and other stakeholder organizations participated in the strategies project. It is the strength and enthusiasm of their ideas and recommendations that formulated the creation of the Strategies and Action Items. This project has evolved into a continuing dialogue with rural residents and stakeholders that will continue into 2006 as partnerships, projects, and programs are created and implemented. Implementation is intended to engage rural residents and stakeholders such that the rural economy can prosper, and can do so without any additional sacrifices to the character and quality of life of rural King County.

Table 2: What the Rural Economic Strategies Do

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate input from rural residents and stakeholder groups including the Agriculture Commission, Forestry Commission, and rural Unincorporated Area Councils. • Identify a Rural Economic Strategies Mission. • Present Rural Economic Strategies and Action Items that can be implemented to support the economic viability of rural King County. • Provide guidance to the King County Executive, Council, and staff in dealing with rural economic issues. • Work in concert with the King Country Comprehensive Plan and Countywide Planning Policies. |
|---|

B. Development of the Strategies

This project was originally established in 2004 by the passage of Comprehensive Plan Policy R-107 and subsequent funding by the King County Council of a one-year position within King County government to serve as the coordinator for the development of the strategies. The Rural Economic Strategies Coordinator started in January of 2005 and is located in the King County Office of Economic Development and Business Relations (BRED). An internal committee, representing several county departments was established to provide direction, input, and support.

For this Report, rural land is defined as that land area outside of the UGA which contains almost eighty percent of the County's land area. The map on the following page illustrates the rural area of King County.

BRED simultaneously initiated three tasks to begin developing the strategies. The first was to gain an overview of the rural areas within King County and what type of uses, particularly farming and forestry, were occurring in the area. The second task was to research and compile an economic overview of unincorporated King County, which is found in Chapter 2 of this Report. The third task was to initiate dialogue with residents and rural stakeholders. BRED met with Councilmembers Dow Constantine, David Irons, Steve Hammond, and Kathy Lambert to discuss what they saw as “economic” drivers and needs in the rural areas of King County.

The dialogue involved a comprehensive year long public process involving meetings and conversations with rural residents, farmers, foresters, business owners, and rural stakeholder groups. Many of these participants were interested in and expressed continuing interest in seeing what this project could accomplish for them. A list of the stakeholder groups that have been involved throughout the project are listed in Table 3: Stakeholder Groups Consulted.

Many rural residents requested a definition of the rural character this project is intended to help protect. What became clear during conversations with rural residents and stakeholders is that rural character is a lifestyle choice, with many definitions. The definition in the Comprehensive Plan is derived directly from the Washington State Growth Management Act definition. Please see Appendix A for the Comprehensive Plan definitions. The Four Creeks Area Council indicated in their response to the public review draft that the independent nature of rural residents is a critical aspect of rural life and should be stressed.

The decision to use economic clusters to describe the economic uses in the rural area parallels the use of clusters in the Regional Economic Strategy recently developed by the Prosperity Partnership for King, Kitsap, Pierce, and Snohomish counties. The following definition of Industry Clusters is from the *Information Design Associates, Cluster-Based Economic Development: A Key to Regional Competitiveness* (Washington, DC.: Economic Development Administration, 1997).

“Industry clusters are agglomerations of competing and collaborating industries in a region, networked into horizontal and vertical relationships, involving strong buyer-supplier linkages, and relying on a shared foundation of specialized economic institutions.”

The key elements of an industry cluster are agglomeration (or large number of firms in the same industry in one region), linkages (horizontal / vertical and buyer / supplier), and specialized institutions (universities, research organizations, etc). Vertical linkages describe the situation where one activity is an input into another activity, as grapes are an input to the production of wine. Horizontal linkages involve the competition of firms or businesses for either markets or inputs, as when computer software firms compete for software engineers in the Seattle region.

The economic clusters found in rural King County include Agriculture, Forestry, Home-Based Businesses, Tourism and Recreation, Rural Towns and Rural Neighborhood Centers, and the Rural Cities.

Table 3: Stakeholder Groups Consulted

<p>King County Agriculture Commission</p> <p>King County Rural Forest Commission</p> <p>King County Unincorporated Area Councils</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four Creeks Unincorporated Area Council • Greater Maple Valley Area Council • Upper Bear Creek Community Council • Vashon Maury Island Community Council 	<p>King County Rural Cites</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black Diamond, meeting with the Mayor • Carnation, Presentation to City Council and meetings with staff • Duvall, Presentation to the City Council and meetings with staff and attended the Economic Development Open House • Enumclaw, meetings with the Mayor and Staff • North Bend, Presentation to City Council and meetings with staff • Skykomish, Presentation to City Council & attended Vision 2010 public meetings • Snoqualmie, meetings with the City Council, Community Relations Committee
<p>Other Related Organizations & Stakeholders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4Culture • American Farmland Trust • Backcountry Bicycle Trails Club • Backcountry Horsemen, Tahoma Chapter • Cascade Harvest Coalition • Cascade Land Conservancy, Presentation of <i>The Cascade Agenda, 100 Years Forward</i> • Food Innovation Center, Oregon State Univ. • Green River Community College • Maple Valley - Black Diamond Chamber of Commerce • Puget Sound Fresh • Snoqualmie Falls Forest Theater • Snoqualmie Valley Governments Association • Suburban Cities Association, meetings with the Small Cities Caucus group • Vashon Chamber of Commerce • Vashon Forest Stewards • Washington State Department of Agriculture, Small Farms Program • Washington State University Extension • WSU Small Business Development Center 	

Each economic cluster is described in detail in Chapter 3 of this Report. The discussion for each economic cluster includes a background on the role of the cluster in rural King county. Current policies are identified to establish context and provide guidance for the development of Strategies and Action Items. The Economic Factors section of each economic cluster identifies and describes opportunities, ideas, and constraints by its economic driver (defined below). The ideas and recommendations contained in the discussion are those that were raised at public and stakeholder meetings and through conversations, letters, emails, and phone calls with residents and stakeholders.

The ideas and recommendations listed in the economic factors discussion have been incorporated into the Strategies and Action Items based on meeting certain criteria. The following criteria were used to determine which recommendations and ideas are appropriate, meet rural economic needs, and are compatible with the rural character.

- Does the idea or recommendation have any impact on or relationship to the economic viability of the rural area?
- Is the idea or recommendation something that the county could have any control over or influence on?
- Is the idea or recommendation feasible for implementation as a partnership, project, or program or does it need additional study, research, or analysis?
- Is the idea or recommendation in compliance with the mission of the Rural Economic Strategies?
- Is the idea or recommendation in compliance with the King County Comprehensive Plan and Countywide Planning Policies?

C. Mission and Comprehensive Plan

This section presents the mission and the guiding direction and policy from the King County Comprehensive Plan. This Report supports a dynamic, evolving rural economic strategies process, thus the mission and the Comprehensive Plan Chapter III: “Rural Legacy and Natural Resource Lands,” will serve to guide implementation of the strategies.

The Mission

The mission of the Rural Economic Strategies is to support and maintain the character of rural King County with an emphasis on advancing the long term economic viability of local farming and forestry. It is the intent of this process that commercial and industrial economic development proposals will be directed towards the rural cities that have the infrastructure and appropriate land areas to handle economic growth. Economic development proposals related to rural resident support and the resource based industries will be directed into the rural towns and rural neighborhood centers. Economic development proposals related to agriculture, forestry, and home-based businesses will be directed into appropriate areas of unincorporated King County. The implementation of the Rural Economic Strategies is intended to result in an increase in the flow of dollars into the rural area and ultimately increase the number of job opportunities for rural residents. The mission statement along with its supporting parameters is shown in Table 4: Rural Economic Strategies Mission.

Table 4: Rural Economic Strategies Mission

The mission of the Rural Economic Strategies is to advance the long term economic viability of the rural area, with an emphasis on local farming and forestry, consistent with the character of rural King County.

Based on input from the rural community, the Rural Economic Strategies:

- Recognize the opportunities, constraints, and role of small scale farming and forestry;
- Recognize the importance of home-based businesses for individuals and families living in the rural area;
- Encourage recreation and tourism opportunities suitable to the area in which proposed;
- Encourage businesses that support the rural economy to locate in existing rural cities, towns and neighborhood centers; and
- Ensure the goals, policies, and implementation strategies are compatible with the lifestyles and character found in the distinct communities of rural King County.

The King County Comprehensive Plan

Chapter III of the King County Comprehensive Plan — “Rural Legacy and Natural Resources Lands” — establishes policies on management of land and uses suitable to the rural area. These policies will form the basis for evaluation of recommendations within this Report. Several Comprehensive Plan Policies set the stage for the types of uses suitable for the rural unincorporated areas of King County and are presented in this section. Other policies that relate to the individual economic clusters can be found in the Appendix of this Report.

KCCP Section 1. Rural Area Designation Criteria and Rural Character

The Rural Area is comprised of all lands in King County outside of the designated Urban Growth Area (UGA), and not including the designated Forest and Agricultural Production Districts. The Rural Area is generally located east of the Urban Growth Area (UGA), with the exception of the rural cities and their UGAs, and also includes the entirety of Vashon-Maury Islands. Within the Rural Area, three land use categories are applied: Rural, allowing low-density residential development, forestry, farming, and a range of traditional rural uses; Rural Town, recognizing historical settlement patterns and allowing commercial uses to serve rural residents; and Rural Neighborhood, allowing small-scale convenience services for nearby rural residents.

While the GMA, the Countywide Planning Policies and King County's policies and regulations call for protecting the Rural Area by limiting housing densities, there are many other features besides density that characterize the Rural Area. Some of the most important features include: integration of housing with traditional rural uses such as forestry, farming and keeping of livestock; protection of streams, wetlands and wildlife habitat; preservation of open vistas, wooded areas and scenic roadways; and reliance on minimal public services. King County is committed to maintaining these features as well, and the policies in this chapter call for continuing and expanding upon these efforts.

KCCP Policy R-102

The Rural Area designations shown on the King County Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map include areas that are rural in character and meet one or more of the following criteria:

- a. Opportunities exist for significant commercial or noncommercial farming and forestry (large-scale farms and forestlands are designated as Natural Resource Lands);
- b. The area will help buffer nearby Natural Resource Lands from conflicting urban uses;
- c. The area is contiguous to other lands in the Rural Area, Natural Resource Lands or large, predominantly environmentally sensitive areas;
- d. There are major physical barriers to providing urban services at reasonable cost, or such areas will help foster more logical boundaries for urban public services and infrastructure;
- e. The area is not needed for the foreseeable future that is well beyond the 20-year forecast period to provide capacity for population or employment growth;
- f. The area has outstanding scenic, historic, environmental, resource or aesthetic values that can best be protected by a Rural Area designation; or
- g. Significant environmental constraints make the area generally unsuitable for intensive urban development.

KCCP Policy R-104

Farming and forestry are vital to the preservation of rural areas and should be encouraged throughout the Rural Area. King County should encourage the retention of existing and establishment of new rural resource-based uses, with appropriate site management that protects habitat resources. King County's regulation of farming and forestry in the Rural Area should be consistent with these guiding principles:

- a. Homeowner covenants for new subdivisions and short subdivisions in the Rural Area should not restrict farming and forestry;
- b. Agricultural and silvicultural management practices should not be construed as public nuisances when carried on in compliance with applicable regulations, even though they may impact nearby residences; and
- c. County environmental standards for forestry and agriculture should protect environmental quality, especially in relation to water and fisheries resources, while encouraging forestry and farming.

KCCP Policy R-105

Uses related to and appropriate for the Rural Area include those relating to farming, forestry, mineral extraction, and fisheries such as the raising of livestock, growing of crops, sale of agricultural products; small-scale cottage industries; and recreational uses that rely on a rural location are also appropriate.

KCCP Section 3. The Rural Economy

An economic development strategy for the Rural Area can support and advance the unique characteristics of rural King County. It is critically important for the Rural Area to sustain the farming and forestry industries. The strategy needs to recognize the role of home businesses and industries as well as a range of other businesses and economic clusters that can be compatible with rural lifestyles and the rural character of the area. Rural economic development means maintaining and, where possible, increasing the flow of income to rural households and revenues to rural businesses and families.

KCCP Policy R-10

King County recognizes and supports home occupations, home industries, and other small businesses that provide services to rural residents and are part of traditional rural economic activities and lifestyles found in King County's Rural Area. The county shall review its regulations and programs to preserve this component of the County's Rural Area. The Executive shall provide this analysis of the regulations and programs, along with any recommended code changes, for review by the King County Council by December 31, 2005.

Comprehensive Plan Policy R-106 is discussed in this Report both in the following section, *What Has Been Accomplished to Date*, and in Chapter 2 as part of the Home-Based Business Economic Cluster section.

Comprehensive Plan Policy R-107 requires the development of the Rural Economic Strategies and the mandates set out are being met by this Report and implementation of the Strategies and Action Items. Table 5: Requirements of Comprehensive Plan Policy R-107 shows the requirements of Policy R-107 and identifies where the specific requirements can be found in the Report.

Table 5: Requirements of Comprehensive Plan Policy R-107

King County shall develop and implement a rural economic development strategy, which shall be consistent with the character and service levels of the Rural Area. The strategy shall be developed in coordination with the Rural Forest Commission, the Agriculture Commission, interested rural residents and other stakeholders. This strategy shall be transmitted to the King County Council by December 31, 2005, and shall include the following components:	
Requirement	Where located
a) Identification of rural economic development policies, goals, objectives and implementation tools necessary to bring income to the businesses and residents of rural King County within the structures of GMA;	Chapters 2 & 3
b) Establishment of an action plan that will identify roles, expected outcomes, milestones and schedules;	Chapters 2 & 3
c) Assessment of the strengths, weaknesses, challenges, and opportunities faced by the King County rural economy;	Chapter 4
d) Inventory of the existing supply of commercial and industrial lands in the Rural Area and an assessment of its sufficiency over the 20-year planning horizon;	Chapter 4
e) Identification of the types of businesses that should be encouraged and supported in rural areas;	Chapter 2
f) Identification of current obstacles to overall rural economic development as well as impediments to the location or expansion of favored industries that are consistent with rural character;	Chapter 2
g) Identification of the implementation tools capable of supporting and encouraging the retention, expansion, and relocation of favored businesses; and	Chapters 2 & 3
h) Consistency with and in support of the APD and the FPD.	Chapter 2, Sections A & B

D. What Has Been Accomplished to Date

This section outlines the 2003 to 2004 regulatory changes that were made to enhance farming, forestry, and home-based business in the rural area. It also identifies the partnerships, projects, and programs that were initiated this year to assist the rural economy.

2003 - 2004 Regulatory Changes

King County regulations help protect the economic value of rural lands by ensuring that new development is compatible with the surrounding rural character, preserves environmental quality and integrity, reduces the risk of flooding, and manages traffic. Over the last couple of years, in part based on Policy R-106, King County has adopted a number of changes to its regulations to address a number of aspects of the rural economy. These changes include:

Allowing a Greater Diversity of Products to be Sold in Rural Areas

- Agriculture products sold at farms stands and farmers markets are no longer limited to those products produced on site, but 60% of the agricultural product sales must be grown or produced in Puget Sound counties. (21A.08.070)
- The definition of agricultural products now includes value-added products such as jams, cheeses, dried herbs, or similar items. (21A.08.060)
- The sales area for garden product sales is increased from 500 square feet to 2,000 square feet in the Agriculture zones. (21A.08.070)

Eliminating Barriers to Business Cooperatives

- Processing, storage, and refrigeration of agricultural products are now allowed. Products are no longer limited to those produced on site, but 60% of the agricultural products must be grown or produced in Puget Sound counties. Larger facilities must be accessory to agriculture uses and can operate in an existing farm structure such as a barn. The largest processing facilities are allowed in the Agriculture zones on properties that are at least 35 acres in size. (21A.08.080, 21A.08.060).

Diversifying Economic Activities

- **Wineries** are now allowed in the Agriculture and Rural zones and the wine does not have to be produced from grapes grown on site. Underground storage that is constructed completely below natural grade may double the overall size of the winery. Wineries located in the rural zones can have a tasting room for wine produced on site. Special events, such as weddings or sampling events are permitted at wineries in the rural zones but they are limited to two per month. (21A.08.080)
- The amount of space allowed for a **home-based business** in the Rural, Agriculture, and Forest zones is increased by calculating the outdoor storage and parking areas separately from the indoor space and it is based on lot size. The maximum size of vehicles that can be used for home occupations in these zones has been raised to 2.5 tons. (21A.30)
- **Small saw mills** are allowed in the RA-10 zone on lots of at least 10 acres. (21A.08.080)
- **Natural resource and heritage museums** are allowed in the Agriculture and Forest zones in existing farm structures, such as barns, and in forestry structures, such as sawmills. (21A.08.040)
- **Farm and forest machinery repair** is allowed as an accessory use to agriculture or forestry operations in the Agriculture and Rural zones. This allows repair of machinery as a business and not limited to machines used on site. (21A.08.050)
- **Dog training** facilities are allowed in the Agriculture, Rural, and Urban Reserve zones. (21A.08.050)

Reducing the Regulatory Burden of Regulations on Agriculture and Forestry

- **Agricultural ditch maintenance** no longer requires a separate county clearing and grading permit if conducted pursuant to a Farm Management Plan developed in consultation with the King Conservation District. (16.82.150)
- **New agriculture can expand** into unforested wetland and stream buffers with an approved Farm Management Plan developed in consultation with the King Conservation District. (21A.24)
- **Forest practices regulated by the county are now subject to the State Forest Practice rules**, not the regulations that apply to residential or commercial development. (16.82)
- With a county **Forest Stewardship Plan**, a landowner may avoid the development moratorium associated with State Forest Practice rules, if the future development area is not included in the harvest. (16.82)

Completed and On-Going Rural Economic Strategies Action Items

During meetings and conversations with rural residents and stakeholder groups such as the Agriculture Commission and Rural Forestry Commission, potential partnerships, projects, and programs were recommended. County staff explored the recommendations and found that several presented immediate opportunities to benefit the economic vitality of the rural area. In consultation with participating county departments and divisions, BRED evaluated these opportunities to determine those that could be implemented in 2005 with support from existing staff and programs, and with little to no county financial resources. The partnerships, projects, and programs listed below were determined to be too valuable to the rural area to wait until the Report was finished.

Completed Partnerships, Projects, and Programs

- **Get Fresh Week** – To support the State of Washington Farmers Market Week, Executive Sims declared Get Fresh Week in August with the Slogan: “The Time is Ripe to Eat Local.” BRED coordinated this effort with the KC Agriculture Program, Puget Sound Fresh, Cascade Harvest Coalition, the Executive’s office, and other partners.
- **Harvest Celebration and Farm Tour** – BRED, in coordination with 4Culture helped sponsor this year’s KC Washington State University Extension’s Harvest Celebration and Farm Tour. Historic agricultural information was added to the tour guide and several agricultural heritage sites were added to the tours.
- **Skykomish Vision 2010 Plan** – BRED, at the invitation of the Mayor and Council of the Town of Skykomish, participated in the public meetings held this past spring and summer to develop a vision for Skykomish.
- **Vashon Forest Stewards** – BRED secured three cargo containers to serve as a lumber drying kiln and storage for equipment and tools. BRED also connected this group with the Highline Community College Small Business Development Center to help develop business and marketing plans for their value-added wood products.
- **Infrastructure Improvement Application** – BRED coordinated and submitted a \$3 million infrastructure improvement grant to the federal Economic Development Administration on behalf of the cities of North Bend and Snoqualmie and the Snoqualmie Tribe. This

application has passed the first recommendation threshold, and if funded, the collective projects would create over 2,000 new jobs for rural residents in the Snoqualmie Valley over the next eight years.

On-Going Partnerships, Projects, and Programs

- **Poultry Processing Facilities** – BRED and KC Agriculture Program are working with Puget Poultry of Washington to develop a USDA-inspected poultry processing facility. USDA certification will enable poultry growers throughout the county to increase their markets by selling products to supermarkets and restaurants. The facility will be able to process chickens, ducks, turkeys, and rabbits.
- **Farmer Chef Connection Conference** – Continue to support this inaugural conference that will bring farmers and local chefs together to network. The conference will be held in King County in February of 2006 and will encourage the use of local farm produce by area restaurants. The conference is being modeled after the successful farmer-chef conferences in Portland, Oregon. Partners include the county, Puget Sound Fresh, KC Washington State University Extension, Washington Department of Agriculture Small Farms Program, FORKS (the Seattle Chapter of the Chefs Collaborative), and others. Following completion and evaluation of the conference, the county may seek to establish it as an annual event.
- **Grass Fed Beef & Mobile Processing Unit** – In response to a growing demand for grass fed beef locally and the need to locally process that beef, BRED and the KC Agriculture Program are exploring market opportunities and potential partnerships for a USDA-inspected local processing facility, which would allow growers to sell to supermarkets and restaurants.
- **Small Farm Expo** – BRED is working with Green River Community College and other partners to add a business development track to this KC WSU Extension small rural landowner educational event, scheduled for March 2006.
- **Way Finding and Standardized Signage / Tourism Enhancement Program** – BRED, the KC Roads Division, KC Parks & Recreation Division, and 4Culture, in partnership with Snoqualmie Valley Governments Association, the State, and others are working to develop a pilot project for thematic and consistent signage for parks, historical, cultural, scenic, and other sites throughout the area to enhance the tourism market in the Snoqualmie Valley.
- **Agricultural Partnerships** – The county partners with local agricultural groups like the Cascade Harvest Coalition to deliver projects, such as Puget Sound Fresh and Washington FarmLink, which enhance the economy of the rural area and provide positive resources for rural residents.

E. Implementation of the Strategies and Action Items

Implementation

Implementation efforts of the Strategies and Action Items in 2006 and beyond will focus on the following:

- Continuation of existing and the creation of new partnerships, projects, and programs that will add economic benefit to the rural area while maintaining the rural character.

- Review with both internal and external stakeholders potential code revisions, relative to recommendations contained in this Report, particularly around agriculture, forestry, and home-based businesses.
- Evaluate new recommendations and ideas when presented by rural residents, businesses, or stakeholder organizations to determine if the idea should be developed into an action item that can then be implemented as a partnership, project, or program.
- Explore the potential for studies and research important to a better understanding of the rural economy or any of its economic clusters as identified and recommended by rural residents and businesses.

Annual Activities Report

To track implementation of the Strategies and Action Items in this Report, the Executive will provide an annual update to the County Council, which will be made available to the public. The Annual Report will provide an update on what was accomplished the previous year and set forth new and continuing partnerships, projects, and programs to be implemented the following year. Recommendations for new Strategies or Action Items can be made at any time by rural residents, businesses, and stakeholders. Recommendations will be considered based on the review process.

Chapter 2: Rural Economic Cluster Profiles and Strategies

This chapter addresses the following rural economic clusters: Agriculture, Forestry, Home-Based Business, Tourism and Recreation, Rural Towns and Rural Neighborhood Centers, and the Rural Cities.

The discussion for each economic cluster will include the following components:

- 1) **Background** – discussion of the cluster and its role in the rural area.
- 2) **Policies** – provides that the Comprehensive Plan will assist in determining the compatibility and suitability of proposals for rural economic strategies to be implemented within each economic cluster. (Note: The Comprehensive Plan text and policies for each economic sector can be found in the Appendix, along with relevant Countywide Planning Policies.)
- 3) **Economic Factors** – will identify and describe opportunities, ideas, and constraints by its economic driver that were raised at the public meetings and at the meetings held with rural stakeholder organizations such as the Agriculture and Rural Forestry Commissions.
 - a) **Market Driven** – refers to those factors that are being driven by the economy as a whole. These factors relate to supply and demand responding to consumer demands, examples here are the increase in public demand for farmers markets and coffee stands on every corner.
 - b) **Infrastructure Driven** – refers to the supporting or underlying “structures” that must be in place for a business or industry to succeed, examples may include sawmills, USDA processing facilities, or large animal veterinarians.
 - c) **Regulatory Driven** – refers to federal, state, and / or county regulations and practices that specify permitted uses, conditional uses, limitations on a specific industry, or how a specific use can be developed.
 - d) **Other** – refers to all items that fall outside of the above parameters, an example here might include developing model business marketing plans.
- 4) **Cluster Economic Strategies and Action Items** – This section presents the Strategies and Action Items for the specific economic cluster.

Not all of the ideas and recommendations presented in the economic cluster discussions are included as either Strategies or Action Items. The process developed to evaluate ideas and recommendations to determine implementation as a Strategy or Action Item is outlined in Chapter 1 under Section B. Development Process.

Chapter 3 is a compilation of all the Economic Cluster Strategies and Action Items, as well as the General Strategies and Action Items not included under any economic sector.

A. The Agriculture Cluster

The story of agriculture in King County spans many centuries. Native peoples were the area's first farmers. They mastered the practice of burning off forestlands to create open meadows for the growing of edible bulbs, bracken fern roots, and berries. Newcomers arriving in the 1850s found these cleared "prairies" very attractive for settlement. These prime garden spots included the fertile bottomlands of the Duwamish River, the White River, the Cedar River, Ranger's Prairie at Snoqualmie, Squak Prairie at Issaquah, and Jenkins Prairie at Maple Valley.

Change has been a constant ever since. Shifting markets, fluctuations of the economy, a growing population, and emerging technologies - all have shaped and reshaped the local agricultural scene. Only the county's temperate marine climate, fertile soil, and abundant rainfall remain the same. These natural attributes offer hope for the future of farming in King County, a future firmly rooted in the past.

... Written by Flo Lentz, 4Culture

1. Background

The fertile valley soils and temperate marine climate has enabled agriculture to flourish in King County. The urbanizing of the Puget Sound region and fluctuating agricultural markets nationwide has impacted farming in the county. Today, the shift is from larger farms with few products, to smaller farms often growing a diversity of crops to meet current market demands. The numbers seem to indicate that agriculture is making a comeback in the county with sales increasing from \$99 million in 1997 to \$120 million in 2002, but the challenges facing this economic cluster are still significant.

In a recent Census of Agriculture by the State of Washington, King County ranked 14th out of the 39 Washington counties based on value of production. Only three western Washington counties Snohomish, Skagit, and Whatcom Counties ranked higher.

A critical mass of agricultural land is needed to support a diverse agriculture economy and necessary infrastructure, such as feed stores and large animal veterinarians, and is another reason to retain the remaining agriculture lands. Today, there are about 40 thousand acres in the county that have been zoned for Agriculture and much of that land lies within the Agricultural Production Districts (APDs). Some of the agriculturally zoned lands are either idle or underused, and the reasons the property owners are allowing this to happen should be explored.

Additionally, the county is still losing agricultural land outside of the APDs. The county should continue to explore the reasons behind the loss of agricultural use on these lands to see what options might be available to ensure that more farmlands stay in production.

Growing for a commodity market is increasingly difficult in today's agricultural market place. Many farmers are growing produce for the niche or specialty markets, with crops such as Asian pears or banana leaves. Others are looking to value-added products, turning the raw produce into jams, sauces, or ciders.

Today, the two largest agriculture industries in King County are dairy and nursery products, however the numbers are changing every year with dairy apparently on the decline and nursery products on the rise. For instance, in 1997 both dairy and nursery products accounted for around \$40 million, yet in 2002 dairy was down to \$29 million or 20% of the county's total production value while nursery products were up to \$72 million which represents almost 60% of value of farm production in King County

The livestock industry appears to represent an increasing and possibly significant portion of the county's agricultural value. This industry generates little in what can be reported as annual sales, such as an annual crop or raw milk sales, thus numbers that would show an industry value for comparison are not available. However, it is estimated that there are currently about 22,500 head of cattle and approximately 20,000 equine (including horses, mules, and donkeys) in the county. It has also been estimated that the boarding, feeding, and shoeing of 20,000 equine animals would generate around \$80 million a year in sales and services.

King County Washington State University Extension (WSU Extension) provides an array of services and programs to the agricultural community. The mission of WSU Extension is to engage people, organizations, and communities to advance knowledge, economic well-being, and quality of life by fostering inquiry, learning, and the application of research. The WSU Extension administers the following agricultural support programs that are grant funded and new grant funding will need to be obtained if these programs are to continue:

- **Small Farm Expo** – is a one-day annual event in the spring bringing technical assistance and education to small acreage landowners, reaching over 1,000 county citizens. Funding for this program will no longer be available after the 2006 Small Farm Expo.
- **Harvest Celebration and Farm Tour** – is a one-day annual event in the Fall that promotes local agriculture and agricultural heritage by bringing 5,000 to 8,000 visitors to local farms and related sites. Funding for this program is no longer available.
- **Cultivating Success** – in the past consisted of two 12-week courses and an internship targeting new, small scale sustainable agriculture producers. Funding for this program is no longer available.
- **Livestock Program** – the WSU Extension has identified the need in King County for a full time faculty position to support and enhance current programs with technical knowledge in raising livestock, business management, and marketing. No funding for this position currently exists.

The Farmers Market Taskforce initiated by Executive Sims and former Department of Health Director Alonzo Plough, has been instrumental in identifying and resolving issues that might otherwise impede certain products to be sold in farmers markets. It is comprised of farmers, market managers, Washington State University food safety researchers, and officials from the federal and local levels. This diverse group has developed standards for the safe handling and sale of products that traditionally were not allowed at farmers markets. For example meats and wines are now allowed to be sold directly via the markets because of the interdisciplinary work of this group. The county should continue to partner with and support the work of this taskforce.

The Cascade Harvest Coalition, a close partner with King County, has a goal to increase public awareness, appreciation, and support for the economic, environmental, and cultural benefits of agriculture in the region. The Coalition has several roles:

- Promote preservation and protection of agricultural lands and resources,
- Enhance community food security and health by improving access to and consumption of locally-produced food, and
- Promote coordinated action and dialogue among the broad diversity of agricultural interests on issues affecting the region's farmers, agricultural resources and quality of life.

The Coalition achieves these roles through a number of programs and activities including Washington FarmLink, Puget Sound Fresh, Northwest Farming for Humanity, and support of the Washington Agricultural Summit and the WSU Extension annual Harvest Celebration and Farm Tour.

2. Comprehensive Plan

The King County Comprehensive Plan provides a strong policy basis for conserving agricultural lands and promoting agriculture in the county. The Comprehensive Plan states that King County will promote and support agriculture as a part of a diverse, regional and sustainable economy. The Comprehensive Plan policies related to agriculture are included in the Appendix of this Report. These policies will guide the development of new Agriculture Cluster Strategies and Action Items.

Additionally, any Agricultural Cluster Strategies and Action Items proposed for implementation will need to be consistent with and support the goals and policies of the Agriculture Production Districts as stated in the Comprehensive Plan.

3. Economic Factors

The discussion of the market driven, infrastructure driven, regulatory driven, and other economic factors relative to the agricultural economic cluster are based on recommendations and comments made by rural residents and stakeholder organizations.

Market Driven Factors

The majority of the comments received under market driven factors, particularly during the public meetings focused on livestock, access to land, and support of King County programs that assist with market driven issues.

- **Dairy and Cheese.** Large scale dairy operations are hard pressed to stay economically viable in the current market; while small scale cheese operations utilizing local sources of cow, sheep, and goat milk are being developed in the Puget Sound region.
- **Cattle / Grass Fed.** Grass fed beef and meat is growing in popularity throughout the Puget Sound region. For example, a nationally known natural food store sells 40 head of grass fed beef weekly. All of it is imported from Australia because this volume of local grass fed cattle is not available.

- **Sheep.** While sheep are not big business currently in rural King County, it is estimated that there are over 1,000 sheep being raised. Because of the susceptibility of sheep to foot rot there is a perception that sheep are not present in the county. However some breeds are more susceptible than others. Other factors that may contribute to the lack of sheep in the region are the high cost of fencing to keep out predators and the lack of processing facilities.
- **Direct Marketing Opportunities.** Farmers receive their highest return from direct marketing opportunities, particularly farmers markets. While the number of farmers markets has grown from around 12 markets ten years ago to around 25 markets in the county next year, exploring opportunities for direct sales should be a recommendation.
- **Access to Land.** The limited amount of land available for farmers to lease and the high cost of land in rural King County are of concern to rural residents and farmers interested in either obtaining land to farm or expanding an existing farm.
- **Washington FarmLink.** FarmLink is a joint project of the King County Agricultural Commission and the Snohomish County Agricultural Advisory Board, which connects people with agricultural resources and technical expertise. Today, in the FarmLink program there are 172 people enrolled who want to farm and only 39 landowners willing to rent or sell their properties. The county is also working with other groups, such as the Hmong farmers, who are looking for land to farm in the county. The county should explore the possibility of providing incentives to encourage landowners to rent their land for farming purposes as part of the FarmLink program.
- **Farmlands Preservation Program.** This is a voluntary program, where landowners sell the development rights to their property and allow restrictive covenants (limiting use and development) to be placed on the land. King County has preserved 12,600 acres of farmland by purchasing the development rights to land utilizing this program.
- **Access to Capital.** Getting started in farming is an expensive proposition. Many people who want to farm have too few resources to get started or struggle along for few years and finally quit because they never developed the momentum and / or obtained the dollars necessary to succeed. The county should explore grants, revolving loans, low costs loans, or other options to assist with start up, initial operating costs, and expansion to assist individuals who want to farm obtain access to the necessary capital and operating funds.

Infrastructure Driven Factors

Infrastructure comments received over the past several months supported and expanded upon many existing programs and recommended new ones as listed below.

- **Puget Sound Fresh.** King County helped to create Puget Sound Fresh, now a regional program of the Cascade Harvest Coalition. This program is designed to encourage consumers, wholesalers, retailers, and restaurants to seek out and purchase locally-grown products. The program also explores ways to improve the quality and freshness of farm products available to local residents and businesses.
- **Processing Facilities.** USDA processing facilities are needed in King County for poultry, grass fed beef, and other livestock so that growers have more options to sell and market their farm raised livestock.

- **Commercial Kitchens.** Commercial kitchens, either as cooperatives or part of a culinary institute, have been identified as one of the infrastructure needs for rural farmers who cannot afford to convert their home kitchens to make value-added products such as jam or sauces.
- **Water Right Issues.** Many farms in King County, including some owned by the County, have either insufficient or no legal access to water for irrigation purposes. The water rights never existed or have been rescinded. Additionally, high value crops that require irrigation, such as baby vegetables, berries, flowers, and other produce that can be grown with season-extension techniques, such as hoop houses on small parcels of land, are one potential solution to the high cost of land in the county. Unfortunately, these crops require irrigation and the additional water needed for irrigation may not be available.
- **Agricultural Drainage Assistance Program.** This is an innovative effort that will let farmers maintain the drainage system on their farmlands with updated methods that will avoid harmful effects to fish, especially those listed under the Endangered Species Act. Both citizens and staff alike often refer to this program as the *fish'n'ditch* program. Yet some farmland is becoming water saturated and too wet to farm, as the ability to drain these lands has become either too expensive or just not even possible due to regulatory and / or permitting issues. The county should investigate strategies that make it easier or more cost effective for farmers to drain their properties.
- **Large Animal Veterinary Services.** Explore the adequacy of the number, types, and locations of large animal vets in the county. One concern mentioned is that many of the large animal vets are either near the age of retirement or specialize in equine to the exclusion of other types of livestock, thus limiting the services available for large farm animals.
- **Livestock Auctions.** A concern was expressed that livestock auctions are now limited in number and location. It was recommended that a review of the current county regulations and ordinances related to livestock auctions may be beneficial.

Regulatory Driven Factors

Several regulatory and policy issues were raised by rural residents and stakeholder organizations relating to evaluation of codes, permitting, and policies. It was suggested by rural residents and farmers at the meetings that the county revisit and evaluate its regulations and practices in regard to the following recommendations.

- **Coordination of Federal, State, and County Regulations.** Evaluate regulations to make sure that federal, state, and county regulations are compatible, complementary, and do not contradict each other.
- **Easy Access to all Regulatory Information.** Explore options for one stop access to regulations pertaining to agriculture
- **Horticulture Program.** This program offers technical and cost-share assistance to horticulture operations.
- **Livestock Program.** The primary purpose of this program is to support the raising and keeping livestock in a manner that minimizes the adverse impacts of livestock on the environment. In King County impacts by livestock on water quality and salmonid fisheries habitat can be minimized by implementing the Livestock Management Ordinance (LMO).

The WSU Extension would like to provide a livestock specialist position to support the county's livestock program and other related programs such as the grass-fed beef program.

- **Hazardous Food Permit Coordination.** Farmers who sell easily perishable foods at farmers markets need to get a separate hazardous food permit for each market they sell at. At \$200 for each permit, this can be very expensive for small farmers who sell at several different markets.
- **Seasonal Workers.** Concern was raised that seasonal workers who help with planting, trimming, or harvesting crops are identified as employees in county regulations. Regulations should be reviewed and revised to define and make provisions for seasonal and / or temporary farm workers.
- **Waste Disposal Regulations.** Farmers processing produce, regardless of the type of produce, are required to hire a certified septic technician to establish that the sewage is not defined as industrial wastewater and that sewage effluent applied to an infiltrative surface does not exceed typical residential effluent characteristics. For small operations, this can be very costly and the regulations should be reviewed and evaluated.
- **Agricultural Related Home Industry Regulations.** The existing conditional use process for farmers to create value-added products on site, is expensive and often a lengthy process.
- **Parking Regulations.** The existing parking, driveway, and paving requirements for agriculture related businesses should be reviewed and evaluated in terms of proposed usage, potential impacts on neighbors, and compatibility with rural character.
- **Fire Codes.** A concern has been expressed that existing fire codes may be excessive for existing and proposed agricultural use. Review regulations for small barns and stables to determine when and if barns and stables need to comply with commercial fire codes.
- **Assessments.** The county should evaluate combining several of the special service assessment fees for the agricultural community to try and keep costs down. These could include, but is not limited to the storm water fee, conservation district fee, and drainage fees.
- **Ranch-Based Competition.** There appears to be a growing interest in ranch-based competitions, such as cattle sorting, roping, etc. It was recommended that the regulations on such activities be evaluated.

Other Factors

Rural residents expressed support for and continuation of the several existing community programs and suggested several other issues or concerns for the county to consider.

- **The Agriculture Commission.** The Commission was established in 1995 to advise the King County Executive and Council on ways to enhance and promote commercial agriculture in the county. Staff support for the Commission is critical to the effectiveness of the Commission and should be continued.
- **Urban / Rural Interface.** The county should continue to support and partially fund existing programs such as Puget Sound Fresh and Washington FarmLink. These partnership efforts support important interactions between urban purchasers and rural producers.
- **Affordable and Temporary Farm Worker Housing.** Both affordable housing and temporary farm worker housing are an issue in rural King County. Existing code regulations should be explored for options to deal with these issues.

- **Nuisance Animals.** Rural residents expressed issues with deer, peacocks, and other animals becoming nuisances.
- **Right-to-Farm Issues.** Concerns were raised about surrounding new “suburban” neighbors and other individuals complaining to the county about adjacent and nearby typical farming activities, such as roosters, manure, or tractor noise.

4. Agriculture Cluster Economic Strategies and Action Items

The implementation Strategies and Action Items for the Agriculture Economic Cluster will focus on those programs that are under the King County Agricultural Program whose function is to bring together the County’s previous efforts to preserve prime agricultural soils, with recent efforts to encourage the activity of agriculture.

RES-A1 Promote and Enhance Agriculture Production.

Action Items

- **Agriculture Commission** – Continue to support the Agriculture Commission with its activities to support agriculture and in its role as advisor to the King County Executive and Council.
- **Agricultural Related Non-Profit Organizations** – Continue to partner with non-profit organizations, such as the Cascade Harvest Coalition, whose goals are related to the support and enhancement of agriculture in the county and throughout the region.

RES-A2 Promote Programs that Educate and Encourage Urban Residents and Businesses on the Importance of Buying Local Produce.

Action Items

- **Urban / Rural Interface** – Continue to support existing programs, such as Puget Sound Fresh, whose partnership efforts support the crucial urban / rural interaction. The interface encourages urban residents and businesses to buy local rural produce. Buying local produce, participating in annual crop subscriptions, and patronizing restaurants that use local produce will help keep local farmers and producers viable and help retain the agricultural base.
- **“Get Fresh Week”** – Continue to support Washington Farmers Market Week each year to support and increase the purchase of local produce. In August, Executive Sims declared “Get Fresh Week” with the slogan: “The Time is Ripe to Eat Local.”
- **Harvest Celebration and Farm Tour** – Continue to support the WSU Extension Harvest Celebration each fall. In 2005, the county in coordination with 4Culture added historic agricultural information to the tour guide and agricultural heritage sites to the tour. Grant funding for this annual program is no longer available, and the county will work with the WSU Extension to try to obtain new grant funding to continue this valuable program.
- **Farmer Chef Connection Conference** – Continue to support this inaugural conference that will bring farmers and local chefs together to network. The conference will be held

in King County in February of 2006 and will encourage the use of local farm produce by area restaurants. The conference is being modeled after the successful farmer-chef conferences in Portland, Oregon. Partners include the county, Puget Sound Fresh, WSU Extension, Washington Department of Agriculture Small Farms Program, FORKS (the Seattle Chapter of the Chefs Collaborative), and others. Following completion and evaluation of the conference, the county may seek to establish it as an annual event.

RES-A3 Enhance the Agricultural Market and Economic Base.

Action Items

- **Poultry Processing Facilities** – Continue to work with partners to develop a USDA-inspected poultry processing facility. This privately operated facility would be able to process chickens, ducks, turkeys, and rabbits. The USDA certification will increase the market for poultry growers throughout the county by allowing them to sell to supermarkets and restaurants. Current partners include Puget Poultry of Washington and Green River Community College. This project may be eligible for a Community Development Block Grant loan for operations and tenant improvements.
- **Grass Fed Beef & Mobile Processing Unit** – Continue to explore opportunities to provide a privately operated USDA-inspected processing unit(s) in response to the growing local demand for grass fed beef and the need to process that beef. The county is exploring opportunities and potential partnerships. Startup costs will vary and the county could explore opportunities for grant and low interest loan funds to help defray these costs.
- **Farmers Markets** – Continue to support the existing county farmers markets and help new farmers markets become successful. County staff works directly with farmers markets and supports the regional Puget Sound Fresh program and the Small Farms Program of the Washington State Department of Agriculture. Both programs support farmers markets in the region at which county farmers can sell their produce.
- **Commercial Kitchen** – Continue to explore options to develop a privately operated commercial kitchen, possibly as a cooperative or as part of a culinary institution. This facility would enable local farmers and rural entrepreneurs to make USDA-inspected value-added products, such as sauces and jams, which can then be sold in specialty stores, supermarkets, and on the world-wide web. Based on similar facilities in the Pacific Northwest, startup costs will vary based on size and scale of operation. The county could explore opportunities for grant and low interest loan funds to help defray these costs.
- **Drainage Options** – Explore options available to provide lower cost drainage solutions for farmers whose lands are becoming saturated due to inadequate drainage facilities.
- **Agriculture Related Home-Based Business Regulations** – Further review county regulations and procedures governing agriculture related home-based businesses, taking into consideration the need to ensure compatibility of these activities with the surrounding neighborhood and rural character. Invite the Agriculture Commission, farmers, and other agriculture related stakeholders to 1) document specific regulations or

procedures that act as obstacles to establishing or operating agriculture home-based businesses, including the conditional use permitting process, and 2) identify potential solutions to remove these obstacles while maintaining compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood and rural character.

RES-A4 Provide Business Assistance to the Agriculture Industry.

Action Items

- **Small Farm Expo** – Continue to work with Green River Community College and other partners to create a business development track for this WSU Extension business assistance event in March 2006.
- **Agriculture Education Programs** – Investigate opportunities to partner with WSU Extension, Green River Community College, Lake Washington Technical College, and others to promote existing agricultural education programs.
- **Cultivating Success** – Work in partnership with the WSU Extension to seek grant funding to continue this 12-week course and internship, as well as other programs that target and provide support for new and existing small scale sustainable agriculture producers.
- **Model Business Plans** – Explore the availability of model business plans for agricultural businesses and place on the Rural Resources Website (Strategy RES-G1).
- **Livestock Industry** – Explore options to fund a livestock extension agent within the WSU Extension to support the county livestock program, the growing grass-fed beef program, and other livestock and equestrian issues.

B. Forestry Cluster

In the early 1890s, about a third of Washington's population worked in logging camps, sawmills, shingle mills, and in factories making wooden doors and window sashes. Nearly 1.2 billion board feet of lumber and almost 1.9 billion shingles were shipped from the state in 1892. Huge trees still filled the coastal forests, and no one thought the supply would ever run out. Bothell, for instance, got its start in 1886 when David Bothell started a lumber camp and shingle mill in the area.

Until just recently, two national leaders in timber harvest and forestry practice were based and had major operations in King County; Weyerhaeuser and Plum Creek Timber. Weyerhaeuser, the first and still one of the largest timber companies in the State of Washington, has a history dating back to January 3, 1900. Plum Creek Timber Company merged with the Georgia-Pacific Corporation's The Timber Company making it, in July of 2000, the second largest private owner of timberland in the nation. Thanks to the leadership of these forestry companies, heightened public awareness, and environmental protection policies and initiatives, much is being done to ensure that timber and other environmentally-dependent industries include land management, habitat protection, and species protection measures.

... excerpts from *Seattle & King County, Gateway to the Pacific Northwest*, 2001

1. Background

The conservation of the county's forests is extremely important for the many values forestlands provide: clean water, fish and wildlife habitat, flood control, recreation, scenic beauty, and carbon sequestration. Forestry is the most predominant land use in King County, plays an important role in the county's economic base, and provides tax revenue for the county. The entire eastern half of the county land base was originally protected by a forest designation created by the county in 1985 to protect commercial forestlands from incompatible uses. This area was later designated as Forest Production District (FPD) and is the county's forestland of long-term commercial significance as required by the state Growth Management Act. Outside the FPD, in the rural areas, there are still many acres of forested lands in smaller tree farms and residential parcels.

In recent years, the FPD acreage in forest production has decreased as land areas have been set aside for protection. The 1994 Federal Forest Plan nearly eliminated logging in the Mount Baker Snoqualmie National Forest which includes over 300,000 acres in the county. The Seattle Watershed eliminated most logging on its 90,000 acres when it adopted its Habitat Conservation Plan in the 1990's. Today, 340,000 acres of the FPD remain in active forest production, 90,000 acres are part of the Washington State Department of Natural Resources trust lands, and the remaining acreage is in private ownership.

The face of private forestland ownership has also changed in recent years as the two largest forest landowners, Plum Creek and Weyerhaeuser, began to sell their land holdings. And, when Weyerhaeuser sold its forest land areas to Hancock Timber, it also closed the last major sawmill

in the county. In an effort to conserve large tract production forests, the county invested 22 million dollars and purchased the development rights on 90,000 acres of the Snoqualmie Tree Farm.

Over the past few decades, the rural area acreage in large private timber production has declined as the urban area has expanded and portions of the rural area have been subdivided and sold as rural residential lots. In the areas outside the FPD, the rural residential zoning allowed the large forest landowners to sell their holdings in smaller lots, resulting in an increase in the number of backyard forest landowners. Often these forestlands have either been unmanaged for years, and are predominately aging hardwood stands, or are industry plantations due for thinning. Left unmanaged, these stands are susceptible to fire, disease, and insect damage. Many of these new landowners may not consider themselves tree farmers, but they have purchased pieces of former tree farms that require proper management whether the owner intends to harvest the trees or not. These landowners, with education, permit simplification, and innovative market ideas, have the potential to maintain and / or enhance the health of their forestlands and even harvest some of the forest. One of the goals of the Water and Land Resources Division's Firewise initiative is to work with landowners on improving forest health.

The Water and Land Resources Division's forestry technical assistance program combined with WSU Extension's forest stewardship courses have reached hundreds of these landowners and have generated enthusiasm in several communities for forest management and thinning activities. The Vashon Forest Stewards have set up a small mill, and are developing markets for island-grown wood from forests being managed with stewardship plans. The Tolt River Highlands neighborhood has written a community fire plan and organized a multi-property thinning project to reduce fire hazard. Many individual landowners have completed forest stewardship plans that include harvest components. Continuing and expanding upon these programs will provide the business opportunities necessary for low-impact harvest operators, small mills, and value-added product producers to be successful in the county.

In 1996, King County adopted the Farm and Forest Report, which recommended strategies to keep forestry viable. The formation of the Rural Forest Commission, the beginning of forestry technical assistance, forest stewardship education programs, and innovative land conservation efforts were all a direct result of that report and should be continued.

2. Comprehensive Plan

The King County Comprehensive Plan provides a strong policy basis for conserving forestlands and encouraging forestry. The Comprehensive Plan states that "King County shall promote and support forestry... as a part of a diverse, regional and sustainable economy." The Comprehensive Plan policies related to forestry are included in the Appendix of this Report. These policies will guide the development of new Forestry Cluster Economic Strategies and Action Items.

Additionally, any Forestry Cluster Strategies and Action Items for implementation will need to be consistent with and support the goals and policies of the Forest Production Districts as stated in the Comprehensive Plan

3. Economic Factors

Rural residents and stakeholder organizations presented the county with comments on opportunities, challenges, and constraints related to the forestry cluster of the rural economy. The following discussion organizes these comments by market, infrastructure, regulatory, or other economic factor.

Market Driven Factors

Small acreage forest landowners face challenges to profitability, especially when the stands were neglected by previous owners or not properly managed. Several suggestions were directed at reducing costs and increasing the value of small timber operations.

- **Specialty Markets.** Creation of specialty markets for wood products and value added products could enhance timber harvest opportunities and value for small forestland owners.
- **Wood Waste Products.** Explore alternative uses of waste products such as saw dust, small diameter thinned wood, and wood scraps.
- **Buy Local Wood.** A “Buy Local Wood” campaign should encourage the sale of local wood and wood products, leading to increased profits to forest landowners and product manufacturers.
- **Create Opportunities.** Help create opportunities to set up new businesses that work with non-industrial private forest (NIPF) landowners.
- **Coordinated Forest Activities.** Several nearby small landowners could coordinate forestry activities, such as thinning forest stands, and each would maximize potential return by sharing in the major expense of transporting and setting up the necessary equipment in their area.
- **Green Certification.** Green certification of forest operations can offer added value to landowners. However, certification is expensive and difficult for smaller operations to justify the cost. Options to reduce the cost of certification for small landowners should be explored. Forest products from well-managed small acreage forests should be recognized as “green” even if they have not achieved forest certification.

Infrastructure Driven Factors

- **Sawmill Availability.** The majority of local saw mills have left the region, just a few small mills remain in the area and only a few companies have equipment and / or staff trained to utilize portable mills. It is expensive to transport logs, so the distance to saw mills affects profitability.
- **Specialized Equipment.** The infrastructure needed to serve small landowners is limited, costs are high, and log prices are low. Many landowners want a low-impact harvest, with careful tree selection. This requires specialized equipment and trained operators. There are few trained operators available for this type of small harvest. One opportunity that could be explored is the displaced workforce trained in forest production and harvesting that resulted from the recent sale of major forest landholdings and closing of regional mills. Local secondary manufacturers of wood products might also result in higher process for logs.

Regulatory Driven Factors

- **Layers of Regulations.** The primary regulatory concern expressed is the perception that there are too many layers of regulations on forestry, including federal, state, and county. The state Forest Practices Act regulates forest practices unless the activity is part of a conversion from forestry to another use or the activity occurs on a parcel platted after 1960. In those cases, the county has jurisdiction. The county also regulates any permanent clearing. One instance where there is overlap is the county's shoreline permit being required for forest practices in shoreline areas. This permit is not required in most Washington counties.
- **Permit Process.** The county recently revised its regulations to facilitate long-term forestry on parcels where it does have jurisdiction. There could still be improvements in the permit process to alleviate concern that the permits take too long and are too expensive.
- **Development Moratorium.** One specific concern has to do with the state requirement that a development moratorium be placed on a property if it is harvested under a state permit. Landowners would like to be able to thin a property without having the moratorium placed on their property.

Other Factors

- **Business Development Assistance.** Rural forestry related business owners expressed an interest in obtaining business development, operation, and marketing information on forestry related businesses to either enhance their existing business or start a new business.

4. Forestry Cluster Economic Strategies and Action Items

RES-F1 Promote and Enhance Forestry.

Action Items

- **Rural Forest Commission** – Continue to support the Rural Forest Commission with its activities to promote forestry and in its role as advisor to the King County Executive and Council on policies and programs related to forestry.
- **Forestry Related Organizations** – Develop partnerships with non-profit and other organizations whose goals are to increase public awareness, appreciation, and support for the economic, environmental, and cultural benefits of forestry in the county and throughout the region.
- **Forest Stewardship** – Continue to provide and possibly expand services and education programs for forest landowners to foster knowledge about the importance of retaining and managing their forested lands.
- **Healthy Forestlands** – Continue to partner with WSU Extension, Washington Department of Natural Resources, the USDA Forest Service, and others to create quality education and stewardship programs that promote the goal of healthy forestlands on both public and private land holdings.
- **Forestry Web Page** – Develop an online resource that provides information for rural landowners to effectively manage their forestlands and evaluate harvest options.

RES-F2 Enhance the Forestry Market and Infrastructure.

Action Items

- **Low Impact Infrastructure** – Develop partnerships with stakeholders and businesses to develop and recruit needed low impact infrastructure, such as mobile sawmills and low-impact harvesters, to support economic harvesting of small acreage forestry tracts.
- **Green Building Certification** – Work with the green building industry to promote the recognition of high quality forestry stewardship and local forest products within the green building point system.
- **Vashon Forest Stewards** – Continue to partner with the Vashon Forest Stewards, an organization committed to environmentally sensitive forest thinning, forest products, and quality forest management of small parcels. In 2005, at the request of the Rural Forest Commission, the county arranged for donated containers for use as a kiln and storage of equipment and tools and for business and marketing plan assistance to this group.
- **Forestry Training for Youth** – Continue to partner with other agencies to provide grants and technical assistance for after school training and activities related to forestry. Explore opportunities to apply for grants to continue and expand the program, which will receive federal funding in 2006.

RES-F3 Provide Business Assistance to Forest Landowners.

Action Items

- **Forest Related Small Business Support** – Continue to partner with non-profit organizations and forest operators who provide services and markets to forest landowners. A modest amount of funding is in place for 2006 for a forestry grant program to promote and support businesses using innovative approaches for use of forest products and to strengthen local infrastructure for forestry. Explore opportunities to apply for grants and / or develop long term funding for this effort.
- **Fire Management Plans** – Continue to partner with rural communities as each develops fire management plans that support thinning operations to create healthy forests. Use the 2006 Fire Protection Initiative as an opportunity to work with stakeholders and assess existing programs and regulations to maximize fire plan effectiveness.
- **Forest Enhancement Events** – Continue to sponsor events that promote forest stewardship and showcase effective management techniques. Explore options for continued funding of the Small Farm Expo and Harvest Celebration and expand the forestry presence at these events.
- **Model Business Plans** – Explore the availability of model business plans for forestry related businesses and place on the Rural Resources Website (Strategy RES-G1).

C. Home-Based Business Economic Cluster

1. Background

There are many people who work out of their homes either as a home-based business or as an employee who telecommutes. Numerous national and regional studies indicate that the number of people working from their home is steadily increasing. Working from home has many impacts on the economy including reducing the need for certain types of infrastructure (such as road capacity) and increasing the need for others (such as high speed Internet connection). Working from home also helps support the retail shops, services, and restaurants in the rural area, supporting commercial endeavors in the rural cities, towns, and neighborhood centers.

Data on home-based businesses is generally not available anywhere in the country based on the very nature of the economic cluster. Unless the business owner is required to have a permit or license from a local or state jurisdiction, there is no way of tracking the number and types of home-based businesses. The United States Small Business Administration Office of Advocacy published a report in 2004 that analyzed available existing data on home-based businesses throughout the country which does provide some insight, from a nationwide perspective:

- The majority of home-based businesses appear to be in services (52%); followed by construction (16%); retail trade (14%); finance, insurance, and real estate (5%); transport, communications, and utility (4%); wholesale trade (3%); manufacturing (3%); and other types of business (3%).
- The study found that home-based businesses in the construction and services sectors represent a rapidly growing element of home-based businesses while finance, insurance and real estate, agricultural services, forestry, fishing, mining, and manufacturing appear to be the slowest to be expanding.
- Home-based businesses are generally in individual proprietorships (91%), followed by S corporations (5%), and partnerships (4%).
- The majority of home-based businesses have no employees (93%), followed by those with one to four employees (6%), and very few have five or more employees (1%).
- Home-based business owners work, on average, 26 to 35 hours a week; ten hours less than owners of similar non-home-based businesses.
- Less than ten percent of home-based businesses report annual receipts greater than \$100,000 a year while 37.5% report annual receipts of less than \$5,000 a year.

A study conducted by Lake Country, a predominately rural but rapidly growing area of British Columbia, surveyed entrepreneurial home-based businesses in 1996 and found that in a district with just under 3,000 homes, twenty-five percent of the homes had a home-based business. The report concluded that the minimum economical impact generated by these home-based businesses was almost \$21.5 million (Canadian) a year. A rural community near Lake Country, Peachland, British Columbia, conducted a similar survey and found that 17% of their households had home-based businesses.

Telecommuting is another work related activity that allows people to work at home. A survey sponsored by AT&T in 2001 found that one in five Americans telecommutes at least part the

time. Telecommuting is popular with employees with 87% of the companies on the year 2000 *Fortune 100 Best Companies to Work For*, allowing employees to telecommute at least part of the time. AT&T's study found that employers save \$10,006 annually per employee in reduced absenteeism and job retention costs when they allow employees to telecommute.

A home-based business may be operated by a resident. King County's zoning code provides for two categories of home-based businesses. The categories are based on a combination of factors, including number of employees and the area taken up by the business. The two categories are:

Home Occupation - allowed as a permitted use and no permit is required. The limitations include:

- No more than 20% of the square footage of the home may be used for the business;
- In rural areas, outdoor areas devoted to the business may use no more than 1 % of the lot, up to a maximum of 5,000 square feet;
- Only one non-resident may be employed by the business;
- Parking must be provided for a non-resident employee and for patrons who come to the business;
- Sales are by mail order and telephone with off-site delivery; and
- Services to patrons or onsite are by appointment only.

Home Industry - allowed as a conditional use on property one acre or larger. The limitations are:

- No more than 50% of the square footage of the home may be used for the business;
- No more than four non-residents may be employed by the business;
- Parking must be provided for each non-resident employee and for customers;
- Sales are generally limited to items produced on site; and
- Additional conditions may be required to ensure compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood, limits on hours, types of outdoor lighting, and noise levels.

The zoning code limitations on home-based businesses serve to contain the impacts of business activity on site. Neighbors may be disturbed by increased traffic, noise, smells, or other off-site impacts of a business activity.

Business activity may also be allowed in residential areas as a standalone business, not subject to the same limitations that apply to home-based businesses. For example, veterinary clinics are allowed as a conditional use in rural residential zones, subject to conditions relating to areas where animals are kept. Agricultural product sales are allowed as a permitted or conditional use in rural residential zones, subject to limits on floor area, kinds of products sold, and other measures to reduce impacts.

2. Comprehensive Plan Policies

The King County Comprehensive Plan provides a strong policy basis for encouraging home-based business in the rural unincorporated areas of the county. The Comprehensive Plan policies related to home-based businesses are included in the Appendix of this Report. These policies will guide the development of Home-Based Business Economic Cluster Strategies and Action Items.

3. Economic Factors

The home-based businesses economic cluster received a significant number of comments from the rural residents. Some residents are concerned that their home-based businesses be allowed to continue while others are concerned about increased commercial activities in the residential areas.

Market Driven Factors

- **Markets for Home-Based Business.** Rural residents asked for support from the county for information about and to help create markets for home-based business services and products.
- **Access to Capital.** Rural residents asked for assistance to identify financing options available for home-based businesses.
- **Agriculture and Farm-Based Businesses.** As discussed in the Agriculture Section earlier in this Chapter, concerns were expressed about the lack of information on opportunities to produce and market value-added products.

Infrastructure Driven Factors

- **Web Connectivity.** Availability of cable and/or wireless options for connections to homes and rural businesses vary throughout the rural area and is of concern to rural residents. In some areas there is limited or no access and in other situations the initial installation cost is excessive for an individual.
- **Technical Assistance.** Home-based business operators often need resources for technical assistance related to business plans, international trade, and green business practices and would like to see assistance from the county in this arena.
- **Business Link Site.** A comment was received about exploring the option of developing a business link site, similar to the existing King County FarmLink site that matches available farm land with individual who want to farm.
- **Business Cooperatives.** It was suggested that the county explore options with rural cities, towns, and neighborhood centers about creating business cooperatives, where rural home-based businesses can share in the cost and use of office space, printers, copiers, conference rooms, etc.

Regulatory Driven Factors

- **Conditional Use Permit.** Numerous rural residents raised concerns about the time and cost involved in obtaining a conditional use permit for home industries in the rural area to ensure efficiency and effectiveness and asked that the county review and modify its regulations.
- **Flexibility.** Concern was expressed that the regulations do not permit enough flexibility, especially in regards to new or slightly different businesses that do not exactly fit any one category. It was suggested that the county should evaluate current practices and regulations for flexibility to accommodate new ideas or businesses.
- **Home, Farm, and Forest Support Businesses.** It was suggested that the county evaluate regulations that affect services and other support businesses for farmers, foresters, and other rural businesses.

- **Fire Codes.** Concerns were expressed by rural residents that implementation of certain fire code regulations can be extremely expensive and generally the scale of protection required is not necessarily warranted based on usage. It was suggested that the county evaluate the King county fire codes as applicable to home-based businesses to ensure efficiency and effectiveness.

Other Factors

- **Partnership Opportunities.** Rural residents expressed interest about options the county might implement to provide information about home-based business opportunities. It was suggested that the county evaluate the creation of a rural permit coordinator position and / or providing home-based business technical assistance.
- **Marketing Plan Assistance.** Rural residents are interested in obtaining assistance with and / or access to model home-based business marketing plans.

4. Home-Based Business Cluster Economic Strategies and Action Items

RES-H1 Promote and Encourage Compatible Home-Based Businesses.

Action Items

- **Home-Based Business Regulatory Assistance** – Explore options to assist home-based businesses with the county regulatory process, including potential use of a Rural Permit Coordinator (Strategy RES-G2).
- **Home-Based Business Regulations** – Further review county regulations and procedures governing rural home-based businesses, taking into consideration the need to ensure compatibility of these activities with the surrounding neighborhood and rural character. Invite Unincorporated Area Councils, chambers of commerce, business owners, neighborhood associations, and other rural stakeholders to 1) document specific regulations or procedures that act as obstacles to establishing or operating appropriate rural home-based businesses and 2) identify potential solutions to remove these obstacles while maintaining compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood and rural character.
- **Home-Based Business Technical Assistance** – Work with existing programs that provide technical assistance to home-based businesses such as the Small Business Development Centers, colleges, and community colleges.
- **Web Connectivity** – Explore opportunities for enhanced web connectivity for rural residents and businesses.
- **Model Business Plans** – Explore the availability of model business plans for home-based businesses and place on the Rural Resources Website (Strategy RES-G1).

D. Tourism and Recreation Cluster

1. Background

Tourism and recreation in the rural area play an important role in the quality of life for all residents of King County and the region. Additionally, compatible rural tourism and recreation opportunities can provide jobs for rural residents and bring dollars into the rural economy. These jobs could be from an array of professions as diverse as whitewater tour guide, trail maintenance / landscape supervisor, or farm stand assistants. Visitors to rural King County will often need places to eat, to sleep (be it campground or bed and breakfast), and to buy gas, supplies, and souvenirs.

Rural King County offers a diverse spectrum of active and passive recreation opportunities for residents and tourists through an extensive network of parks and trails. Recreation opportunities include kayaking, fishing, or watching a stream float by; hiking, biking, or riding on horseback on the many trails; picnicking; golfing; or simply enjoying scenic Snoqualmie Falls or other rural mountain vistas.

The King County Parks and Recreation Division support the following programs:

- **Parks and Destinations Program** – King County is the regional provider of great destinations for recreation adventures including hiking, bicycling, camping, climbing, backcountry mountain biking, swimming, and more.
- **Trails Program** – King County owns and maintains one of the nation’s most exciting regional trail systems, consisting of more than 175 miles of regional trails with 300 miles proposed for the future.
- **Environmental Stewardship Program** – King County is the regional leader in protecting, preserving, managing, and maintaining, open space, resource lands, habitat, and large parklands containing more than 25,000 acres.
- **Partnerships, Grants, Volunteering** – King county manages an innovative and nationally recognized business plan developed by Parks to encourage partnerships, provide recreation grants, and encourage volunteering. The “Partnership for Parks Initiative” means the King County Park System is more entrepreneurial, efficient, and exciting.

Tourism opportunities in rural King County are also diverse. The rural area offers farmers markets, farm tours, wineries, arts and crafts, antiques, the annual King County Fair, and festivals, as well as significant cultural and historic sites, some of which portray the role that agriculture, forestry, and the railroad have had in the development of King County through the decades.

The King County Historic Preservation Office, part of the Office of Business Relations and Economic Development, supports the following programs:

- **Fall City Historic Street Signs** – In cooperation with the King County Roads Services Division, produced and installed 68 new street signs in Fall City. The signs incorporate the historic name of the street with the current name. This is the first in a series of historic signage projects that will be implemented throughout unincorporated King County. The goal

of this and related projects is to enhance and preserve the character of the county's rural communities.

- **Historic Resource Inventories** – Comprehensive historic resource inventories have been completed in the cities of Snoqualmie, North Bend, and Carnation, and in unincorporated Snoqualmie Valley. Information from these projects serves as the basis for landmark designations, building rehabilitation and adaptive re-use, general community planning purposes, and development of tourism marketing materials.
- **Barn Again Initiative** – The county will partner with property owners, local banks, chambers of commerce, historical societies / museums to develop economic and other incentives to preserve and adaptively re-use the county's significant historic barns.
- **Snoqualmie Mill Power Plant** – Currently working with the cities of North Bend, Snoqualmie, the Weyerhaeuser Company, the Snoqualmie Valley Historical Society, and former residents of the Snoqualmie Falls mill town, to find an owner / developer who will stabilize and find a new use for the historic power plant and smokestack at the mill site.
- **Heritage Corridor Program** – Working to develop a Heritage Corridor Program in cooperation with 4Culture and the King County Roads Services Division. Identification, documentation, and enhancement of the county's scenic and historic corridors will provide the foundation for on-going tourism marketing efforts.
- **Transportation Enhancement Grant** – The County has received a grant to support identification and documentation of historic and cultural resources associated with the road network in rural King County. Data collected in this project will be used for development of interpretive signage and other tourism marketing materials.

2. Comprehensive Plan Policies

The King County Comprehensive Plan provides direction and policies designed to enhance and support tourism and recreation in rural King County. The Comprehensive Plan policies related to tourism and recreation are included in the Appendix of this Report. These policies will guide the development of new Recreation and Tourism Cluster Economic Strategies and Action Items.

3. Economic Factors

Rural residents and rural stakeholder organizations presented the county with a wide variety of comments on opportunities, challenges, and constraints related to the recreation and tourism cluster of the rural economy. The following discussion organizes these comments by market, infrastructure, regulatory, or other economic factor.

Market Driven Factors

- **Way Finding Signs.** The majority of the comments received under market driven factors, particularly during the public meetings focused on what is perceived as a lack of information about and signage to the recreation and tourism opportunities available in rural King County.
- **Eco-tourism.** Many individuals brought up the most recent tourist boon of eco-tourism stating that King County has many of the attributes those searching out eco-tourism want, such as farms and forestlands, farm stands and farmers markets, organic farming, sustainable forestry, and salmon runs. Three areas of rural King County have expressed interest in

pursing the eco-tourism market are the farmers of the Sammamish Valley Agricultural Production District (APD), Vashon-Maury Islands, and the Snoqualmie Valley area.

- **Agricultural Heritage.** The Sammamish Valley APD is located adjacent to a suburban area. The farmers within the APD are exploring opportunities to provide activities, festivals, and educational programs to these suburban residents. They hope to demonstrate how a successful farm operates and educate people on the agricultural heritage of the area and how successful habitat stewardship programs benefit everyone in the county.
- **Sustainable Communities.** Vashon-Maury Island is focusing much of their attention on island sustainability and have already created educational programs and are attracting visitors interested in learning more about sustainable communities. BRED is currently working with the Vashon-Maury Island Community Council and its Economic Development Committee on economic strategies for the community.
- **Recreation and Tourism.** Within the Snoqualmie Valley area, the rural cities, rural communities, and others entities, such as the Snoqualmie Forest Theater, are exploring options to encourage the many tourists that already visit Snoqualmie Falls to linger in the Valley and take advantage of the great diversity of other recreation and tourist opportunities located throughout the valley.
- **Marketing Plans.** Rural cities, organizations, and entities are also looking to the county to provide leadership and possibly assist with tourism marketing plans, tourism business retention and recruitment, way finding signage, and website promotion.
- **Cultural Sites.** Promotion of historic farms, railroad history, and other historic and cultural sites in rural King County was also mentioned as an important item to rural residents. It was suggested that the county partner with rural residents and rural stakeholders to further promote and implement the national Barn Again Initiative that King County has adopted.

Infrastructure Driven Factors

Infrastructure comments received over the past several months supported and expanded upon many programs already under way in the county.

- **Trail System.** Residents voiced strong support of King County's continuing efforts to complete its extensive trail system throughout the county.
- **Trailheads and Parking.** Another important issue to rural residents related to trails is the need for additional trailhead access and providing parking to meet the demand created by increasing number of persons using the trails.
- **Trail Surface Choices.** Rural residents and stakeholders desiring equestrian trails, raised the issue that horses do not do well on paved trails, that equestrian trails need to be constructed utilizing natural materials.
- **Mountain Biking Trails.** Those residents and stakeholders interested in hiking or biking were also interested in more biking trails and hope that the county will consider creating more off road or natural type trails through some of the newer parks in the rural area.
- **Bike Lanes.** The biking stakeholders asked that when the county is or has influence over designing and rebuilding of roads that bicycle lanes should be separate from vehicle lanes, wherever possible.

- **River Access.** Rural residents and stakeholders stated that they want more access to rivers and streams along with additional boat launch sites and vehicle parking at the launch sites.
- **Campgrounds.** Rural residents would like to see an increase in the numbers and diversity of campgrounds available in rural King County. During the public meetings several individuals mentioned that additional campgrounds with several amenities, such as the King County Tolt MacDonald Park and Campground in Carnation, which has river access, would be well used.
- **Signage.** Several rural residents and stakeholder groups indicated that recreation and tourist sites would receive additional visitation if additional way finding and site signage is provided. Other residents feel that providing additional interpretive signage will increase public awareness of the county's natural and historic resources. They recommended that interpretive signage should be provided at parks, cultural and historic sites, and for crops being grown on farms and forestlands.
- **King County Library.** The King County Library on Vashon indicated that it provides tourism information for residents and visitors and recommended that the other libraries in King County, particularly in the rural cities, also provide this information. The Vashon Library feels that this service increases public awareness of the opportunities to recreate in the area.
- **Natural Areas.** Rural residents would like to see parks left in a natural state, they feel it is unnecessary to provide manicured lawns and completely paved access and parking. These residents felt that this turns the rural parks into urban facilities and is more costly for the county. They suggested that the dollar savings could be applied to opening new access areas within the rural parks.
- **Public Transportation.** A few rural residents stated that public transportation to rural parks and tourist destinations would enhance visitation to these areas. Vashon Island residents feel that the ferry schedules and limited public bus service limits visitor access to the island. Residents in eastern rural King County would like to see additional bus service out into the rural areas.
- **Recreation Guides.** Information dissemination about recreation and tourist destination sites, activities, and festivals was another item several residents and the rural cities raised. This type of information, along with links to the appropriate sites for detailed information, is currently being proposed as part of a Rural Resources Website Action Item (RES-G1).

Regulatory Driven Factors

The regulatory issues raised by rural residents and stakeholder organizations relate to permitting processes and regulations as often being limiting factors to providing additional tourism and recreation sites and activities in the rural area.

- **Design Standards.** It was suggested that the county revisit and evaluate its policies and regulations in regard to development requirements for driveways, common areas, parking lots, etc. of parks and tourist facilities in the rural area. The need to provide the paving and manicured areas, often needed or desirable in urban settings, is not considered necessary nor in character with the rural area by several rural residents.

- **Bed and Breakfast.** It was suggested that regulations relating to development of bed and breakfast and other tourist support industries should be re-evaluated to maximize opportunities for tourist, in the rural area, without sacrificing the rural character.
- **Volunteer Programs.** It was suggested that the county should re-evaluate its volunteer programs and policies. Several outdoor interest groups indicated that they would like the opportunity to work with the county to help construct and open up new trails as well as maintain other areas of the parks, but are limited in these efforts by current policies.
- **Risk Management.** Risk management and liability insurance were raised as a concern for those individuals who want to either open a private enterprise, such as white water trips or farm U-picks, to the public either on public lands or private land. Rural residents asked if the county would review its regulations and policies regarding these issues to minimize, if possible, the exposure of rural property owners or those opening an enterprise on public lands.
- **Multi-Use Sites.** Rural residents and stakeholders feel that the county should look at balancing regulations that may close areas for public access for habitat or open space protection with the need for passive recreation opportunities for rural residents. Rural residents generally understand the need for the habitat protection regulations; however, they feel that the loss of passive recreation access at some of these sites is unnecessary. These stakeholders asked that the county review and evaluate the loss of passive recreation sites to habitat restoration and open space regulations and look at balancing the multi-use of these sites.

Other Factors

- **Grant Programs.** Rural residents expressed support for and continuation of the existing community recreation grants program administered by the Parks and Recreation Division.
- **Community Partnerships.** Rural residents support the existing county community partnerships that support recreation and tourism and should work towards strengthening existing programs and help create new partnerships where needed.

4. Recreation and Tourism Economic Strategies and Action Items

RES-T1 Promote and Enhance Compatible Tourism and Recreation.

Action Items

- **Way Finding and Standardized Signage / Tourism Enhancement Program –** Continue this pilot project to provide way finding and standardized signage as part of a tourism enhancement program in the Snoqualmie Valley. Project partners include the county, the rural cities, rural communities, and the Washington Department of Transportation.
- **Farm / Habitat Tourism Model –** Partner with the Sammamish Valley Agriculture Production District farmers and businesses to create a model for farm-based tourism in the county that will also support the rural / urban link of Strategy RES-A2. This project will encompass tours within the Sammamish Valley of working farms, heritage sites, and

habitat restoration sites. The project will also promote festivals and other events, activities, and educational projects to promote the critical rural / urban link.

- **Historic Preservation Office Programs** – Continue to support the Historic Preservation Office partnerships and programs that enhance tourism opportunities in the rural area. These programs include the Barn Again Initiative; Resource Inventory Updates; Historic Sign Projects; and 4Culture’s Historic Trails Program.
- **Parks and Recreation Division Programs** – Continue to support the Parks and Recreation Division partnerships and programs that support and enhance recreation and tourist opportunities in the rural area. These programs include the Parks and Destinations Program; Trails Program; Environmental Stewardship Program; and the Partnerships, Grants, and Volunteering Program.

E. Rural Towns and Neighborhood Centers Economic Cluster

1. Background

The three unincorporated Rural Towns designated by the Comprehensive Plan are Fall City, Snoqualmie Pass (Alpental), and the Town of Vashon. The Comprehensive Plan finds that unincorporated Rural Towns contribute to variety in development patterns and housing choices and provide employment opportunities, retail shopping and other services to nearby residents. These towns, along with Rural Cities, contain a significant portion of King County's historic architecture and are the primary locations for nonresidential uses in the rural area.

Rural King County also contains several small Rural Neighborhood Centers, which provide limited, local convenience shopping. The Rural Neighborhood Centers as identified within the Comprehensive Plan are:

Bear Creek:	Cottage Lake and Redmond-Fall City Road / 236th NE
East King County:	Greenwater, Baring and Timberlane Village
Enumclaw:	Cumberland, Krain's Corner and Newaukum
Newcastle:	Coalfield and East Renton Plateau
Snoqualmie:	Preston and Stillwater
Tahoma / Raven Heights:	Maple Valley, Hobart, Ravensdale and North Cedar Grove Road
Vashon:	Burton, Dockton, Tahlequah, Portage, Heights Dock, Jack's Corner, Vashon Center, Vashon Service Center, Vashon Heights and Maury Island Service Center

The Rural Towns

Rural Towns are unincorporated towns governed directly by King County. These towns serve as a focal point for community groups such as chambers of commerce or community councils which often participate in public affairs. The purposes of the Rural Town designation are to 1) recognize existing concentrations of higher density and economic activity in Rural Areas, whether by virtue of historical rural settlements or redesignation of an urban commercial center; 2) provide a physical focus for the historic identity of rural communities; and 3) to allow for modest growth of residential and economic uses within these designations if supported by the community and adequate utilities and other public services are available. Unlike rural cities, rural towns are not included in the Urban Growth Area and are not eligible for incorporation as a city or for annexation to an existing city.

Fall City is an unincorporated town located at the intersection of State Highways 202 and 203 and bordered by the Snoqualmie River. This town has an interesting mix of restaurants, retail shops, and services needed by area and regional residents.

Snoqualmie Pass is also designated as an unincorporated town and is also known as Alpental. This rural town is primarily a ski resort with its focus on those services necessary for individuals to enjoy the alpine terrain regardless of the season.

The unincorporated Town of Vashon is located on Vashon Island and supports its surrounding Vashon-Maury islands residents and visitors with a variety of restaurants, retail shops, grocery stores, banks, and other services.

A Vashon Town Plan was developed in 1996 and the Vashon-Maury Island Community Council and its Economic Committee has requested that this Town Plan be used by the county when making decisions about development or redevelopment of any town uses or land areas. (Please see Appendix C, Letter to Julia L. Larson, Coordinator, Rural Economic Strategies from Vashon-Maury Island Community-Council dated October 18, 2005.)

Rural Neighborhoods

Rural neighborhoods are small commercial developments, or in some cases, historic towns or buildings, that are too small to provide more than convenience shopping and services to surrounding residents. They generally do not have services such as water supply or sewage disposal systems any different from those serving surrounding rural development.

Development in Rural Towns and Neighborhood Centers

For this Report, detailed research was performed on the availability of land for development within the designated rural towns and neighborhood centers. Preliminary results of this research indicate there is sufficient land for commercial development in the rural area to serve existing and planned development. In addition to currently vacant lots, approximately nine percent of the commercially zoned lots in the rural, unincorporated portions of the County appear to be used as single family residences. Additional information on the commercial and industrial land inventory can be found in Chapter 4 of this Report.

2. Comprehensive Plan Policies

The King County Comprehensive Plan provides a strong policy basis for promoting and supporting the rural towns and rural neighborhood centers. The Comprehensive Plan policies related to the towns and rural neighborhood centers are included in the Appendix of this Report. These policies will guide the development of new Rural Town and Neighborhood Centers Economic Strategies and Action Items.

3. Economic Factors

Rural neighborhoods and rural towns are critical elements of each rural community's identity and character. In some cases, on Vashon Island and throughout the rural area, many of the historic structures have a significant visual impact on the surrounding area serving as an anchor to the neighborhood's individual identity. At the same time, the older infrastructure that accompanies the historic character of the neighborhood centers may limit future commercial development or redevelopment.

Market Driven Factors

- **Residential Use versus Commercial Use.** The rural neighborhoods continue to accommodate limited infill development commercial use, suitable for a neighborhood center

and compatible with the area in which it is being located. And, while the overall population increase in the rural area is significantly less when compared to the growth in urban areas, it has the potential to provide a larger consumer base for the businesses in these areas.

Additionally, it should be noted that residential uses are still evident on approximately nine percent of the commercial lands inventory that was conducted this past year.

- **Opportunities for Expanding Home Businesses.** A report published by the Small Business Administration Office of Advocacy (SBA) (2004) reports that one of the most critical and difficult stage for businesses was going from one employee (home-based business) to hiring employees. It may be a logical step for these expanding commercial enterprises to move into a nearby rural neighborhood center, rural town, or even one of the rural cities more suitable of the location of the business. It was suggested that the county should review their regulations to ease this transition and at the same time provide assistance to the small business owner to help them work through the process.
- **Historic and Community Identification.** Rural towns and neighborhoods may benefit from identifying a brand for these unique communities. Some commercial properties in rural King County have structures that are at least fifty years old including some built prior to 1905. Many of these older structures reflect the local history of the neighborhood.
- **Marketing and Business Development Assistance.** This effort could be part of a larger marketing effort to help advertise the neighborhood centers and their unique character and businesses, while promoting business retention and recruitment. It was suggested that the rural communities might want to enter into business enhancement partnerships with the county and the creation of business circuit rider position could assist in these business development efforts.
- **General Stores.** Many rural neighborhoods include a general store. The diversity of products offered by these stores varies from location to location adding to the distinct character of the local community. Many of these stores are at a disadvantage in their purchasing power because they are not part of a chain of stores.

Infrastructure Driven Factors

- **Infrastructure Needs.** The limited availability of infrastructure may hinder the viability of some rural neighborhoods and towns. Rural residents recommended that the county assist rural neighborhoods in applying for infrastructure construction grants for items such as sidewalks, roads, and other compatible infrastructure improvements.
- **Meeting Health Department Requirements.** Several rural business owners and residents raised the option of providing alternative septic systems that would accommodate businesses that traditional septic systems would not allow. The King County Department of Public Health currently has a list of approved alternative septic systems that should be referenced for possible use.
- **Assistance with Business Support Incubators.** Rural residents indicated that there is a need, particularly in the rural towns, to provide business support incubators. Vashon has initiated a business support center and it was suggested the county could partner with Vashon to help disseminate the information on start up, costs, and lessons learned in developing the center to interested parties.

Other Factors

- **Information Dissemination.** Rural Residents asked if there was some way the county could assist with providing information about businesses, festivals, or special events in the rural towns and neighborhood centers. Additionally, stakeholders asked if the county could inform the towns and neighborhood centers about existing economic and demographic information and provide this information to interested communities.

4. Rural Town and Rural Neighborhood Economic Strategy and Action Items

RES-N1 Promote and Support Compatible Businesses in the Rural Towns and Rural Neighborhoods.

Action Items

- **Business Enhancement Partnerships** – Explore options and opportunities to work with the rural towns and neighborhood centers on partnerships or programs to promote and enhance the business environment of these areas.
- **Business Support** – Use the Rural Business Circuit Rider action item presented in Strategy RES-G2 to provide business support for those businesses located in the rural towns and neighborhood centers.
- **Road, Sidewalk, and Appropriate Infrastructure Support** – Use the Infrastructure Improvement Application action item and the Private Development Financing action item as presented in Strategy RES-G3 to provide appropriate and compatible infrastructure support for business development in the rural towns and neighborhood centers.
- **Tourism Support** – Use the Way Finding and Standardized Signage / Tourism Enhancement Program action item presented in Strategy RES-TI or other potential partnerships or programs to provide tourism support to the rural towns and neighborhood centers.
- **Model Business Plans** – Explore the availability of model business plans for commercial businesses suitable for location in the rural towns and neighborhood centers and place on the Rural Resources Website (Strategy RES-G1).
- **Rural General Stores** – Explore options related to product purchasing networks, business plan and marketing assistance, and branding for general stores.

F. Rural Cities Economic Cluster

1. Background

The rural cities identified in the King County Comprehensive Plan are Duval, Carnation, Snoqualmie, North Bend, Black Diamond, Enumclaw, and Skykomish. The rural cities are included within the Rural Economic Strategies Report for several reasons. They do the following:

- Serve as the focus for economic growth of the commercial and industrial economic sectors in the rural area.
- Provide retail shopping and services for residents in the unincorporated areas.
- Provide resource business and industry that support farming and forestry that are not suitable for location within the unincorporated area; such as a cheese processing plant.
- Provide jobs for residents of the unincorporated area.

The rural cities are all unique in history, character, population, and economic base. Statistical information in Chapter 4 and the individual city websites provide additional information on each rural city.

To help facilitate the King County Comprehensive Plan direction to focus commercial and industrial economic growth into the rural cities, Strategy RES-C1 was included to encourage the county to create and sustain partnerships with the rural cities to enhance the economic health of the rural area. Several existing partnerships include:

- **Infrastructure Development Application** – BRED coordinated and submitted a \$3 million infrastructure improvement grant to the federal Economic Development Administration on behalf of the cities of North Bend and Snoqualmie and the Snoqualmie Tribe. This application has passed the first approval threshold and if funded, the collective projects would create over 2,000 new jobs for rural residents in the Snoqualmie Valley over the next eight years.
- **Skykomish Vision 2010 Plan** – At the invitation of the Mayor and Council of the Town of Skykomish, the county participated in the public meetings held this past spring and summer to develop the vision for Skykomish completed in August of 2005. This Plan was developed by the Washington State Department of Ecology to direct the clean up activities being implemented within the Town by the State and Burlington Northern Railroad over the next several years.
- **Duvall Economic Development Program** – The county was invited to attend the Economic Development Open House in Duvall in October of 2005 and will continue to work with the City as the program is finalized and implemented.
- **Way Finding and Standardized Signage / Tourism Enhancement Program** – BRED, the KC Roads Division, KC Parks & Recreation Division, and 4Culture, in partnership with Snoqualmie Valley Governments Association, the State, and others are working to develop a pilot project for thematic and consistent signage for parks, historical, cultural, scenic, and other sites throughout the area to enhance the tourism market in the Snoqualmie Valley.

- **Poultry Processing Facilities** – BRED and KC Agriculture Program are working with Puget Poultry of Washington on the development of a poultry processing facility to provide needed processing facilities for poultry growers throughout the county.

2. Comprehensive Plan Policies

The King County Comprehensive Plan states that the rural cities “contribute to variety in development patterns and housing choices and provide employment opportunities, retail shopping and other services to nearby residents.” The Comprehensive Plan policies related to the rural cities are included in the Appendix of this Report. These policies will guide the development of Rural City Cluster Economic Strategies and Action Items.

3. Economic Factors

The discussion of the market driven, infrastructure driven, regulatory driven, and other economic factors relative to the rural cities economic cluster includes comments and recommendations made during meetings and conversations with rural residents and stakeholders. Additionally, the county has met on several occasions with the individual rural cities, the Snoqualmie Valley Governments Association, the Suburban Cities Small City Caucus, and the Maple Valley-Black Diamond Chamber of Commerce.

Market Driven Factors

- **Big Box Stores.** One of the market driven factors being experienced by the rural cities is a loss of retail sales by commuting residents shopping at the relatively new large one-stop shopping retail stores found on the edge of the urban fringe. The cities indicated that both the long term resident commuter and the new comer to the city are stopping by the new Fred Meyer or Wal-Mart stores on their drive home.

Infrastructure Driven Factors

- **Sewers.** Infrastructure needs vary from city to city. Duvall has just completed a new sewer system and thus has lifted the development moratorium that existed for the past few years. Carnation is in the process of working with the county and other partners on developing a new sewer system to handle its present and future needs, however, limited development and redevelopment of existing buildings can occur within the city until this system is complete.
- **Flood Control.** Snoqualmie has several large new residential developments within the city boundaries with some retail and services provided as part of the expansion, however, its downtown area is prone to flooding.
- **Public Water Systems.** North Bend is exploring options to provide water to its expanding commercial and industrial base, while Black Diamond has just completed a new plan for the city.
- **Visitor Center.** Enumclaw is working on a creation of a regional visitors’ center with several partners and is exploring options to use the fairgrounds site currently owned by the county.

- **Upgrading Downtown.** Skykomish is initiating clean-up activities of its downtown area with the State Department of Ecology, Burlington Northern Railroad, the county, and other partners which will be completed over the next few years.

Regulatory Driven Factors

- **Potential Annexation Areas.** While the rural cities have adopted their own development regulations and conduct permitting for their jurisdictions, coordination with the county on development or redevelopment of businesses in potential annex areas was raised as a concern. It was recommended that the county should evaluate its policies and regulations such that development and / or redevelopment in potential annexation areas are also required to meet minimum city standards, so that the buildings and uses will be in compliance once annexed into the city.

Other Factors

- **Tourisms Opportunities.** The rural cities also discussed coordination with the county to expand tourism in the rural area.
- **Business Support.** The rural cities also asked about options for the county providing business support, both in the potential annexation areas and for individual businesses.

4. Rural Cities Cluster Economic Strategies

RES-C1 Create and Sustain Partnerships with the Rural Cities.

Action Items

- **Partnerships with the Rural Cities** – Continue to work with the rural cities to focus commercial and economic growth into the cities and promote rural economic vitality.
- **Regional Rural City-Based Tourism Project** – Continue to discuss and potentially partner with the rural cities, chambers of commerce, and other interested parties on regional tourism based activities and / or actions. Coordinate efforts to ensure compatibility with the Way Finding and Tourism Pilot Project in the Snoqualmie Valley action item presented in Strategy RES-T1.
- **Rural City Economic Development Plans** – Continue to support the rural cities by participating in the creation of economic development plans and reviewing draft plans, when requested by the community. The county is currently working or meeting with Duvall, Skykomish, and Snoqualmie on their current planning efforts.
- **Abandoned Mill Site Redevelopment Plans** – Explore working with appropriate cities and property owners to formulate redevelopment site plans for the abandoned mill sites in the county, which encompass the historic heritage of each site and adjacent land uses.

Chapter 3: Rural Economic Strategies and Action Items – Comprehensive List

This chapter lists the current Rural Economic Strategies and Action Items for implementation. The Strategies and Action Items are based on the discussion in Chapter 2 of the comments, ideas, and recommendations identified during meetings, conversations, and discussions with rural residents and stakeholders. The strategies include 1) partnerships, projects, and programs, and 2) issues and concepts that need further study or analysis. Each strategy has at least one implementing action item and will be implemented by the appropriate county department(s). Each of the Strategies and Action Items included in this Report have been evaluated for compliance with 1) the Mission of the Rural Economic Strategies, 2) the King County Comprehensive Plan, and 3) the King County Countywide Planning Policies. Estimated costs are provided for proposed Action Items when the project includes significant, identifiable costs or when additional staff is needed to implement the project.

The Rural Economic Strategies proposed in this Report are identified and numbered with an “RES” for Rural Economic Strategy, followed by a letter and number to identify the classification and economic cluster of each strategy:

RES-G# – General Rural Economic Strategies

RES-A# – Agriculture Cluster Economic Strategies

RES-F# – Forestry Cluster Economic Strategies

RES-H# – Home-Based Business Cluster Economic Strategies

RES-T# – Tourism and Recreation Cluster Economic Strategies

RES-N# – Rural Town and Neighborhood Centers Cluster Economic Strategies

RES-C# – Rural Cities Cluster Economic Strategies

A. General Rural Economic Strategies

RES-G1 Inform and Communicate with Rural Residents and Businesses.

Action Items

- **Rural Resources Website** – Develop a rural resources web page to provide information significant to rural residents and businesses. The site will provide information and links on agriculture, forestry, home-based business, small business development, tourist destinations and activities, recreation sites, and other information to support and promote the Rural Economic Strategies.
- **Rural Advisory Commission** – Establish a rural citizen advisory committee to advise the King County Executive and Council on timely issues that relate to or potentially impact the rural area. The Commission will be modeled after and complement both the Agriculture and Rural Forestry Commissions.

RES-G2 Provide Rural Business Assistance.

Action Items

- **Rural Permit Coordinator** – Analyze creating a full-time position dedicated to assisting rural residents and businesses understand and proceed efficiently through the county permitting processes. The coordinator will also analyze proposed policy or regulatory changes for potential economic impacts. This position could cost approximately \$90,000-\$100,000.
- **Rural Business Circuit Rider** – Explore with the rural cities creating a full time position to provide technical assistance to support and enhance businesses located throughout the rural area. This position could be jointly funded by the county, the rural cities, and possible grant funds. The Circuit Rider could coordinate and work with the existing business programs in the county such as the Small Business Development Centers and college programs. Business assistance brochures and seminars and a business information database may be developed as part of this program to meet specific needs identified. The total cost of this position, including travel would be around \$100,000 with the county contributing some portion.
- **Coordination Among County Departments** – Continue to explore options for regulatory coordination among the county departments. The county has initiated coordination pilot projects to assist rural residents this past year (locations were Vashon, Black Diamond and Carnation). These pilot projects will be assessed for their effectiveness and will form the basis for future programs.
- **Rural Business Review** – further analyze county regulations and practices on the establishment and operation of businesses in rural unincorporated King County.

RES-G3 Create Partnerships with Rural Communities to Promote Economic Vitality.

Action Items

- **Infrastructure Improvements** – Continue to work with the rural communities to explore opportunities to apply for individual and / or joint federal grants for infrastructure improvements to stimulate economic development. The county submitted a joint application on behalf of the Cities of North Bend and Snoqualmie and the Snoqualmie Tribe in October of 2005, and will continue to work with the rural communities on similar applications in the future.
- **Private Development Financing** – Work with developments to provide financing, where feasible, for commercial and office development through the Housing and Urban Development 108 Loan program.
- **Community Partnerships** – Work with the rural communities to support partnerships and programs through the Unincorporated Area Councils, regional chambers of commerce, and other organizations that have a community focus.

- **Vashon-Maury Island Community Council** – Continue to partner with the Vashon-Maury Island Community Council and its Economic Development Committee on partnerships and projects to enhance economic vibrancy.

RES-G4 Create Partnerships with the Counties of the Puget Sound Region to Promote Economic Vitality.

Action Items

- **Regional Partnerships** – Work with the counties and region-oriented organizations within the Puget Sound region to create and support partnerships and support programs that promote and enhance economic vitality on a regional basis.

B. Agriculture Cluster Economic Strategies

RES-A1 Promote and Enhance Agriculture Production.

Action Items

- **Agriculture Commission** – Continue to support the Agriculture Commission with its activities to support agriculture and in its role as advisor to the King County Executive and Council.
- **Agricultural Related Non-Profit Organizations** – Continue to partner with non-profit organizations, such as the Cascade Harvest Coalition, whose goals are related to the support and enhancement of agriculture in the county and throughout the region.

RES-A2 Promote Programs that Educate and Encourage Urban Residents and Businesses on the Importance of Buying Local Produce.

Action Items

- **Urban / Rural Interface** – Continue to support existing programs, such as Puget Sound Fresh, whose partnership efforts support the crucial urban / rural interaction. The interface encourages urban residents and businesses to buy local rural produce. Buying local produce, participating in annual crop subscriptions, and patronizing restaurants that use local produce will help keep local farmers and producers viable and help retain the agricultural base.
- **“Get Fresh Week”** – Continue to support Washington Farmers Market Week each year to support and increase the purchase of local produce. In August, Executive Sims declared “Get Fresh Week” with the slogan: “The Time is Ripe to Eat Local.”
- **Harvest Celebration and Farm Tour** – Continue to support the WSU Extension Harvest Celebration each fall. In 2005, the county in coordination with 4Culture added historic agricultural information to the tour guide and agricultural heritage sites to the tour. Grant funding for this annual program is no longer available, and the county will work with the WSU Extension to try to obtain new grant funding to continue this valuable program. The project budget is approximately \$20,000 annually not including a .5 FTE.

- **Farmer Chef Connection Conference** – Continue to support this inaugural conference that will bring farmers and local chefs together to network. The conference will be held in King County in February of 2006 and will encourage the use of local farm produce by area restaurants. The conference is being modeled after the successful farmer-chef conferences in Portland, Oregon. Partners include the county, Puget Sound Fresh, WSU Extension, Washington Department of Agriculture Small Farms Program, Seattle Chapter of FORKS (Chefs Collaborative), and others. Following completion and evaluation of the conference, the county may seek to establish it as an annual event. Annual sponsorship by King County could cost from \$2,000 to \$4,000.

RES-A3 Enhance the Agricultural Market and Economic Base.

Action Items

- **Poultry Processing Facilities** – Continue to work with partners to develop a USDA-inspected poultry processing facility. This privately operated facility would be able to process chickens, ducks, turkeys, and rabbits. The USDA certification will increase the market for poultry growers throughout the county by allowing them to sell to supermarkets and restaurants. Current partners include Puget Poultry of Washington and Green River Community College. This project may be eligible for a Community Development Block Grant loan for operations and tenant improvements.
- **Grass Fed Beef & Mobile Processing Unit** – Continue to explore opportunities to provide a privately-operated USDA-inspected processing unit(s) in response to the growing local demand for grass fed beef and the need to process that beef. The county is exploring opportunities and potential partnerships in this arena. Startup costs could range from \$100,000 to \$150,000, and the county could explore opportunities for grant and low interest loan funds to help defray these costs.
- **Farmers Markets** – Continue to support the existing county farmers markets and help new farmers markets become successful. County staff works directly with farmers markets and supports the regional Puget Sound Fresh program and the Small Farms Program of the Washington State Department of Agriculture. Both programs support farmers markets in the region at which county farmers can sell their produce.
- **Commercial Kitchen** – Continue to explore options to develop a privately operated commercial kitchen, possibly as a cooperative or as part of a culinary institution. This facility would enable local farmers and rural entrepreneurs to make USDA-inspected value-added products, such as sauces and jams, which can then be sold in specialty stores, supermarkets, and on the world-wide web. Based on similar facilities in the Pacific Northwest, startup costs will vary based on size and scale of operation. The county could explore opportunities for grant and low interest loan funds to help defray these costs.
- **Drainage Options** – Explore options available to provide lower cost drainage solutions for farmers whose lands are becoming saturated due to inadequate drainage facilities.
- **Agriculture Related Home-Based Business Regulations** – Further review county regulations and procedures governing agriculture related home-based businesses, taking

into consideration the need to ensure compatibility of these activities with the surrounding neighborhood and rural character. Invite the Agriculture Commission, farmers, and other agriculture related stakeholders to 1) document specific regulations or procedures that act as obstacles to establishing or operating agriculture home-based businesses, including the conditional use permitting process, and 2) identify potential solutions to remove these obstacles while maintaining compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood and rural character.

RES-A4 Provide Business Assistance to the Agriculture Industry.

Action Items

- **Small Farm Expo** – Continue to work with Green River Community College and other partners to create a business development track for this WSU Extension business assistance event in March 2006. Funding is no longer available for this project beyond 2006. The project budget is approximately \$10,000 annually not including a .5 FTE.
- **Agriculture Education Programs** – Investigate opportunities to partner with WSU Extension, Green River Community College, Lake Washington Technical College, and others to promote existing agricultural education programs.
- **Cultivating Success** – Work in partnership with the WSU Extension to seek grant funding to continue this 12-week course and internship, as well as other programs that target and provide support for new and existing small scale sustainable agriculture producers.
- **Model Business Plans** – Explore the availability of model business plans for agricultural businesses and place on the Rural Resources Website (Strategy RES-G1).
- **Livestock Industry** – Explore options to fund a livestock extension agent within the WSU Extension to support the county livestock program, the growing grass-fed beef program, and other livestock and equestrian issues. The potential cost to the county of this position could be \$50,000 to \$70,000 with WSU assuming responsibility for overhead and benefits.

C. Forestry Cluster Economic Strategies

RES-F1 Promote and Enhance Forestry.

Action Items

- **Rural Forest Commission** – Continue to support the Rural Forest Commission with its activities to promote forestry and in its role as advisor to the King County Executive and Council on policies and programs related to forestry.
- **Forestry Related Organizations** – Develop partnerships with non-profit and other organizations whose goals are to increase public awareness, appreciation, and support for the economic, environmental, and cultural benefits of forestry in the county and throughout the region.

- **Forest Stewardship** – Continue to provide and possibly expand services and education programs for forest landowners to foster knowledge about the importance of retaining and managing their forested lands.
- **Healthy Forestlands** – Continue to partner with WSU Extension, Washington Department of Natural Resources the USDA Forest Service, and others to create quality education and stewardship programs that promote the goal of healthy forestlands on both public and private land holdings.
- **Forestry Web Page** – Develop an online resource that provides information for rural landowners to effectively manage their forestlands and evaluate harvest options.

RES-F2 Enhance the Forestry Market and Infrastructure.

Action Items

- **Low Impact Infrastructure** – Develop partnerships with stakeholders and businesses to develop and recruit needed low impact infrastructure, such as mobile sawmills and low-impact harvesters, to support economic harvesting of small acreage forestry tracts.
- **Green Building Certification** – Partner with the green building industry to promote the recognition of high quality forestry stewardship and local forest products within the green building point system.
- **Vashon Forest Stewards** – Continue to partner with the Vashon Forest Stewards, an organization committed to environmentally sensitive forest thinning, forest products, and quality forest management of small parcels. In 2005, at the request of the Rural Forest Commission, the county arranged for donated containers for use as a kiln and storage of equipment and tools and for business and marketing plan assistance to this group.
- **Forestry Training for Youth** – continue to partner with other agencies to provide grants and technical assistance for after school training and activities related to forestry. Explore opportunities to apply for grants to continue and expand this program, which will receive federal funding in 2006.

RES-F3 Provide Business Assistance to Forest Landowners.

Action Items

- **Forest Related Small Business Support** – Continue to partner with non-profit organizations and forest operators who provide services and markets to forest landowners. A modest amount of funding is in place for 2006 for a forestry grant program to promote and support businesses using innovative approaches for use of forest products and to strengthen local infrastructure for forestry. Explore opportunities to apply for grants and / or develop long term funding for this effort.
- **Fire Management Plans** – Continue to partner with rural communities as each develops fire management plans that support thinning operations to create healthy forests. Use the 2006 Fire Protection Initiative as an opportunity for to work with stakeholders and assess existing programs and regulations to maximize fire plan effectiveness.

- **Forest Enhancement Events** – Continue to sponsor events that promote forest stewardship and showcase effective management techniques. Explore options for continued funding of the Small Farm Expo and Harvest Celebration and expand the forestry presence at these events.
- **Model Business Plans** – Explore the availability of model business plans for forestry related businesses and place on the Rural Resources Website (Strategy RES-G1).

D. Home-Based Business Cluster Economic Strategies

RES-H1 Promote and Encourage Compatible Home-Based Businesses.

Action Items

- **Home-Based Business Regulatory Assistance** – Explore options to assist home-based businesses with the county regulatory process, including potential use of a Rural Permit Coordinator (Strategy RES-G2).
- **Home-Based Business Regulations** – Further review county regulations and procedures governing rural home-based businesses, taking into consideration the need to ensure compatibility of these activities with the surrounding neighborhood and rural character. Invite Unincorporated Area Councils, chambers of commerce, business owners, neighborhood associations, and other rural stakeholders to 1) document specific regulations or procedures that act as obstacles to establishing or operating appropriate rural home-based businesses and 2) identify potential solutions to remove these obstacles while maintaining compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood and rural character.
- **Home-Based Business Technical Assistance** – Work with existing programs that provide technical assistance to home-based businesses such as the Small Business Development Centers, colleges, and community colleges.
- **Web Connectivity** – Explore opportunities for enhanced web connectivity for rural residents and businesses.
- **Model Business Plans** – Explore the availability of model business plans for home-based businesses and place on the Rural Resources Website (Strategy RES-G1).

E. Tourism and Recreation Cluster Economic Strategies

RES-T1 Promote and Enhance Compatible Tourism and Recreation.

Action Items

- **Way Finding and Standardized Signage / Tourism Enhancement Program** – Continue this pilot project to provide way finding and standardized signage as part of a tourism enhancement program in the Snoqualmie Valley. Project partners include the county, the rural cities, rural communities, and the Washington Department of Transportation. Potential cost to the county could be between \$50,000 and \$100,000.

- **Farm / Habitat Tourism Model** – Partner with the Sammamish Valley Agriculture Production District farmers and businesses to create a model for farm-based tourism in the county that will also support the urban / rural interface of Strategy RES-A2. This project will encompass tours within the Sammamish Valley of working farms, heritage sites, and habitat restoration sites. The project will also promote festivals and other events, activities, and educational projects to promote the critical urban / rural interface.
- **Historic Preservation Office Programs** – Continue to support the Historic Preservation Office partnerships and programs that enhance tourism opportunities in the rural area. These programs include the Barn Again Initiative; Resource Inventory Updates; Historic Sign Projects; and 4Culture’s Historic Trails Program.
- **Parks and Recreation Division Programs** – Continue to support the Parks and Recreation Division partnerships and programs that support and enhance recreation and tourist opportunities in the rural area. These programs include the Parks and Destinations Program; Trails Program; Environmental Stewardship Program; and the Partnerships, Grants, and Volunteering Program.

F. Rural Town and Commercial Neighborhood Economic Strategies

RES-N1 Promote and Support Compatible Businesses in the Rural Towns and Rural Neighborhoods.

Action Items

- **Business Enhancement Partnerships** – Explore options and opportunities to work with the rural towns and neighborhood centers on partnerships or programs to promote and enhance the business environment of these areas.
- **Business Support** – Use the Rural Business Circuit Rider action item presented in Strategy RES-G2 to provide business support for those businesses located in the rural towns and neighborhood centers.
- **Road, Sidewalk, and Appropriate Infrastructure Support** – Use the Infrastructure Improvement Application action item and the Private Development Financing action item as presented in Strategy RES-G3 to provide appropriate and compatible infrastructure support for business development in the rural towns and neighborhood centers.
- **Tourism Support** – Use the Way Finding and Standardized Signage / Tourism Enhancement Program action item presented in Strategy RES-TI or other potential partnerships or programs to provide tourism support to the rural towns and neighborhood centers.
- **Model Business Plans** – Explore the availability of model business plans for commercial businesses suitable for location in the rural towns and neighborhood centers and place on the Rural Resources Website (Strategy RES-G1).
- **Rural General Stores** – Explore options related to product purchasing networks, business plan and marketing assistance, and branding for general stores.

G. Rural Cities Cluster Economic Strategies

RES-C1 Create and Sustain Partnerships with the Rural Cities.

Action Items

- **Partnerships with the Rural Cities** – Continue to work with the rural cities to focus commercial and economic growth into the cities and promote rural economic vitality.
- **Regional Rural City-Based Tourism Project** – Continue to discuss and potentially partner with the rural cities, chambers of commerce, and other interested parties on regional tourism based activities and / or actions. Coordinate efforts to ensure compatibility with the Way Finding and Tourism Pilot Project in the Snoqualmie Valley action item presented in Strategy RES-T1.
- **Rural City Economic Development Plans** – Continue to support the rural cities by participating in the creation of economic development plans and reviewing draft plans, when requested by the community. The county is currently working or meeting with Duvall, Skykomish, and Snoqualmie on their current planning efforts.
- **Abandoned Mill Site Redevelopment Plans** – Explore working with appropriate cities and property owners to formulate redevelopment site plans for the abandoned mill sites in the county, which encompass the historic heritage of each site and adjacent land uses.

Chapter 4: A Profile of the Rural Economy

This chapter provides a brief overview of population, employment, housing, and economic cluster data on agriculture, forestry, and mineral resources, as well as information on the commercial and industrial land inventory conducted in 2005.

The majority of rural King County lies east of the Urban Growth Area (UGA) in central and eastern King County. This area of King County is characterized by forests, streams, open farmland, majestic mountains, and winding scenic lanes. Vashon and Maury Islands on the west side of the main UGA make the remainder of rural King County and have unique vistas, pastoral and natural settings, an island pace of life, and boast a thriving artist community.

A. History of Rural King County¹

History of the Snoqualmie and Sammamish Regions

As the forest receded, homesteaders migrated into the Snoqualmie River and Sammamish River valleys. In the 1860s, families practiced basic subsistence farming, and eked out a living raising livestock, grains, potatoes and fruit. Some farmers cut timber and made hand-split shingles as a cash crop. From crude river landings, valley settlers shipped their produce on scows and small steamboats into the growing city of Seattle.

In the 1880s, a strong market for hops triggered a “hops craze” throughout King County. Many an east county farmer became rich over night by specializing in this lucrative cash crop. The sprawling Snoqualmie Hop Farm in the upper valley prospered for 12 years, employing up to 1200 people during the harvest. But the boom was short-lived. Every hop farm in the region was destroyed by aphid attacks in 1889.

By the turn of the century, east King County farmers had reinvented themselves. A burgeoning market for milk in the cities of Puget Sound brought dairy farming into the spotlight for the next fifty years. This area was home to several important experimental dairy farms. Carnation, Willowmoor, and Hollywood farms specialized in the latest scientific methods of breeding. But dairying provided a comfortable living for average families, too. In 1940, a typical family dairy farm was just 40 acres, and supported 17 cows and 14 acres of clover and grass hay.

Since then, another wave of growth and change has overtaken the farms of the Snoqualmie and Sammamish valleys. Today, many pastures once dotted with grazing Holstein cows now host seasonal produce, flowers, and specialty livestock – another chapter in the agricultural heritage of King County.

¹ The history text in this section is written by Flo Lentz of 4Culture for the Harvest Celebration.

History of the Enumclaw and Soos Creek Plateau Regions

Early settlers were immediately drawn to the rich soils of south King County river valleys. Later, new arrivals cleared farms on the Enumclaw and Soos Creek plateaus. In the 1860s and 1870s, farms in the White River Valley (now the Green River / Kent Valley) supplied the people of Seattle with most their meat, produce, and grain. After the hops craze of the 1880s, area agriculture turned to dairying and poultry farming in a big way.

Populist political movements took root in the farming communities of the south county. White River was the scene of early grange movement activities, and farmers' cooperatives emerged at Enumclaw – the Enumclaw Cooperative Creamer and Farmers Mutual Insurance Company. Scandinavian immigrants populated the plateau, while the first and second generation Japanese and Italians favored the fertile alluvial valleys.

Soon after the turn of the century, the farmlands southeast of Seattle gained renown for row cropping, or truck farming. The Pike Place Market and new methods of long-distance shipping guaranteed both local and national markets for south county vegetables, fruit, and berries. In the 1920s, Kent became famous as the “Lettuce Capital of the World” and was home to commercial canneries and packing plants. By 1940, King County was tops in statewide vegetable production.

Monumental changes to south King County came in the form of flood control on the Green River. In 1962, the construction of Howard Hanson Dam triggered rapid industrialization in the Kent Valley. Farmlands disappeared. But here and there even today, surprising pockets of agriculture remain tucked among the factories and housing developments. On the Enumclaw Plateau, with its scenic views of Mt. Rainier, healthy signs of our farming heritage can still be found at specialty farms, gardens, and ranches.

History of Vashon-Maury Islands

The first farmers on Vashon raised subsistence livestock and planted the sandy soils with orchards of cherries, pears, apples, and quince. In the early 1880s, all kinds of berries were grown – including raspberries, blackberries, gooseberries, and currants. But, by the turn of the century, strawberries reigned supreme.

In 1901, 15,000 crates of strawberries were shipped from the island, and the Vashon Island Strawberry Festival was born. Japanese immigrants to Vashon specialized in strawberry farming. Their numbers increased in the 1910s and '20s, even though first-generation Asians were prohibited by law from owning and leasing land. During the June strawberry harvest, growers hired Native American and Filipino workers by the hundreds.

Vashon also gained fame as a center of greenhouse agriculture. By 1915, there were 13 commercial greenhouse operations on the island, turning out everything

from tomatoes, lettuce, and cucumbers to camellias, roses, and orchids. Chicken ranching was prominent on the island in the 1920s and '30s.

World War II changed Vashon agriculture forever. Most Japanese families did not return after their internment camp experiences. Specialized strawberry farming was no longer profitable, and farming families began once again to diversify. Today's island farms continue to evolve. A host of specialized farms offer products ranging from alpaca wool to walnuts.

B. Economic Profile of Rural King County

Population

In 2004, the population of unincorporated rural King County was 137,000, or around 7.7% of King County's total population of 1,788,300. Vashon-Maury Island has about 10,500 residents, while the rural cities had combined population of 32,580. Table 6: Population for Unincorporated King County, 1980-2004 provides the population numbers for rural unincorporated King County, as well as the rural cities from 1980 to 2004. For comparison, the population numbers for all of King County are also provided.

Table 6: Population for Unincorporated King County, 1980-2004

Jurisdiction	1980	1990	2000	2004	Change 1980- 2004	% Change '80-'04	AAGR²
Unincorporated King County	127,226	129,548	135,123	137,000	9,774	8%	0.31%
Rural Cities							
Black Diamond	1,170	1,422	3,970	4,000	2,830	242%	5.26%
Carnation	951	1,243	1,893	1,895	944	99%	2.91%
Duvall	729	2,770	4,616	5,545	4,816	661%	8.82%
Enumclaw	5,427	7,227	11,126	11,160	5,733	106%	3.05%
North Bend	1,701	2,578	4,746	4,660	2,959	174%	4.29%
Skykomish	209	273	214	210	1	0%	0.02%
Snoqualmie	1,370	1,546	1,531	5,110	3,740	273%	5.64%
Rural City Total	11,557	17,059	28,096	32,580	21,023	182%	4.46%
Total Rural King County	138,783	146,607	163,219	169,580	30,797	22%	0.84%
Total King County	1,269,898	1,507,319	1,737,034	1,788,300	518,402	41%	1.44%

Source: King County Office of Management and Budget, *The 2004 Annual Growth Report* (Seattle: 2004)

² Annual Average Growth Rate

Over eight out of every ten rural King County residents reside in the unincorporated portions of the county. The rural cities account for the remaining 20%. In 2004, Enumclaw was the largest rural city with a population of 11,160, while Duvall and Snoqualmie have the next highest populations of 5,545 and 5,110 respectively. Black Diamond and North Bend had populations of 4,000 and 4,660 respectively, while Skykomish in the far northwestern portion of the county had a population of 210.

Although the bulk of the county's rural population lived outside the rural cities, most of the population growth in the rural areas over the past 24 years occurred in the cities. Moreover, rural population increase lagged the rate experienced by the county at-large.

As shown in Between 1980 and 2004, unincorporated rural King County population grew by 22%, about one-half the rate experienced by all of King County (41%). Most of the population growth in rural King County occurred in the rural cities during this time. Total population in these cities almost tripled and they accounted for about 70% of the total rural population increase that occurred. On the other hand, the unincorporated rural King County population grew by a meager eight percent.

Housing Characteristics

The single-family house is the predominant housing type in the rural cities. (See Table 7: Housing Types for Unincorporated King County and the Rural Cities; 2003.) However, there are significant differences in the housing stock among these jurisdictions. In four of the cities, Black Diamond, Carnation, Duvall and Skykomish, single-family units constitute over 80% of the total units, reaching a peak of 89% in Skykomish and 88% in Carnation. On the other hand, Enumclaw (62%) and North Bend (67%) had the smallest proportion of single-family housing. There were a significant proportion of multi-family units in both North Bend (31%) and Enumclaw (27%). Enumclaw also had a relatively higher proportion of its stock, 11%, in mobile homes. Black Diamond had the highest proportion of mobile homes at 16%. See Table 8: Percent Distribution of Housing Types, 2003 for details.

Table 7: Housing Types for Unincorporated King County and the Rural Cities; 2003

Jurisdiction	Single Family	Multi-Family	Mobile Home/ Other	Total Units
Unincorporated Rural County	NA	NA	NA	NA
Vashon*	4,228	242	397	4,867
Rural Cities				
Black Diamond	1,286	37	246	1,569
Carnation	582	63	14	659
Duvall	1,667	139	184	1,990
Enumclaw	2,819	1,210	496	4,525
North Bend	1,259	579	39	1,877
Skykomish	145	3	15	163
Snoqualmie	1,521	420	19	1,960
Rural City Total	9,279	2,451	1,013	12,743

*Year 2000 from the US Census

Source: *The 2004 Annual Growth Report (AGR)*; 2000 U.S. Census

NA = Not available.

Table 8: Percent Distribution of Housing Types, 2003

Jurisdiction	Single Family	Multi-Family	Mobile Home / Other
Vashon*	86.9%	5.0%	8.2%
Rural Cities			
Black Diamond	82.0%	2.4%	15.7%
Carnation	88.3%	9.6%	2.1%
Duvall	83.8%	7.0%	9.2%
Enumclaw	62.3%	26.7%	11.0%
North Bend	67.1%	30.8%	2.1%
Skykomish	89.0%	1.8%	9.2%
Snoqualmie	77.6%	21.4%	1.0%
Rural City Total	72.8%	19.2%	7.9%

*Year 2000 from the US Census

Source: *The 2004 Annual Growth Report (AGR)*; 2000 U.S. Census

Note: rows may not add up to 100.0% due to rounding.

Employment

Covered employment in all of rural King County (the unincorporated portion and the rural cities) was 30,337 in 2003, the latest year that data is available (see Table 9: Covered Employment Rural King County, 2003). Covered employment consists of those jobs subject to the payroll tax and covered under unemployment insurance.

The bulk of rural employment is in the unincorporated portions of the County. There were 19,954 employees in unincorporated rural King County in 2003, 65.8% of the total (see Tables 9 and 10).

The largest share of rural employment is in the service sector which contains 33% of total employment or 9,922. This is about two times the next largest sector – construction and natural resources – which has 5,237 jobs (17.3% of total rural employment), followed by education (13% of employment) and retail (11.5%).

There were a total of 10,383 covered jobs in 2003 (see Table 9: Covered Employment Rural King County). This is a little over one-third (34.2%) of total rural employment.

Enumclaw had the largest amount of employment of all rural cities, 4,143 jobs or 40% of the cities' total. North Bend, with 2,194 jobs, had the second highest number of jobs, followed closely by Snoqualmie with 1,847. Together, these three cities accounted for about eight out of every ten jobs in King County's rural cities.

While the Washington State Department of Employment reported total employment as well as employment by sector for four of the seven rural cities, employment in two sectors have been suppressed to maintain confidentiality in Black Diamond, Carnation and Skykomish³. Because the number of jobs not reported is a small fraction of total rural cities' jobs, it is nonetheless possible to obtain an accurate picture of the distribution of jobs in these jurisdictions.

³ Manufacturing and FIRE employment in Black Diamond was suppressed. These sectors together totaled 25 jobs. In Carnation, manufacturing and retail sectors were not reported, for a total of 117 jobs. A total of 9 jobs in then retail and construction / resources were not reported. Thus, 151 jobs are not accounted for; this equals 1.5% of total rural city employment.

Table 9: Covered Employment Rural King County, 2003

Jurisdiction	Manufacturing	WTU	Services	Retail	FIRE	Education	Government	Construction & Resources	Total
Unincorporated King County	874	1,801	6,010	1,635	390	2,409	2,390	4,445	19,954
Rural Cities									
Black Diamond	*	32	126	37	*	89	40	113	462
Carnation	*	27	100	42	*	222	56	32	596
Duvall	56	13	453	168	82	152	38	118	1,080
Enumclaw	238	103	1,548	736	634	534	199	150	4,143
North Bend	15	82	789	814	63	141	132	156	2,194
Skykomish	0	0	14	*	0	30	8	*	61
Snoqualmie	115	39	882	44	72	372	100	223	1,847
Rural City Total	424	296	3,912	1,841	851	1,540	573	792	10,383
Total Rural King County	1,298	2,097	9,922	3,476	1,241	3,949	2,963	5,237	30,337

Source: Puget Sound Council of Governments from Washington State Employment Security Department

WTU: Wholesale, Transportation, and Utilities

FIRE: Finance, Insurance and Real Estate

* Suppressed to avoid disclosure.

The rural cities serve as the retail and finance centers for rural residents. In both these sectors, total city employment outpaces employment in the unincorporated areas. However, the bulk of the city jobs tend to be concentrated in the services, retail and education sectors. There is little manufacturing employment in these cities. In four of the cities, services constitute the largest employer, each having over 25% of total employment, reaching a high of almost 50% in Snoqualmie (see Table 10: Percent Distribution of Covered Employment by Location, 2003). A good portion of Snoqualmie's service employment (536 out of 882) is found in sectors devoted to tourism, i.e., accommodation and food services and arts, entertainment, and recreation. Service employment in cities such as Enumclaw and North Bend are also found in motels and restaurants, but in both these cities' service sector, health care and social assistance employment make up a significant portion.

Retail is the second largest employment sector when all cities are considered and in both Duvall and Enumclaw. It is the largest in North Bend, underscoring the key role played by the Outlet Mall in the North Bend economy.

Table 10: Percent Distribution of Covered Employment by Location, 2003

Jurisdiction	Manufacturing	WTU	Services	Retail	FIRE	Education	Government	Construction & Resources	Total
Unincorporated County	4.4%	9.0%	30.1%	8.2%	2.0%	12.1%	12.0%	22.3%	100%
Rural Cities									
Black Diamond	*	6.9%	27.3%	8.0%	*	19.3%	8.7%	24.5%	100%
Carnation	*	4.5%	16.8%	7.0%	*	37.2%	9.4%	5.4%	100%
Duvall	5.2%	1.2%	41.9%	15.6%	7.6%	14.1%	3.5%	10.9%	100%
Enumclaw	5.7%	2.5%	37.4%	17.8%	15.3%	12.9%	4.8%	3.6%	100%
North Bend	0.7%	3.7%	36.0%	37.1%	2.9%	6.4%	6.0%	7.1%	100%
Skykomish	0.0%	0.0%	23.0%	*	0.0%	49.2%	13.1%	*	100%
Snoqualmie	6.2%	2.1%	47.8%	2.4%	3.9%	20.1%	5.4%	12.1%	100%
Total Rural Cities	4.1%	2.9%	37.7%	17.7%	8.2%	14.8%	5.5%	7.6%	100%
Total Rural	4.3%	6.9%	32.7%	11.5%	4.1%	13.0%	9.8%	17.3%	100%

Source: Puget Sound Regional Council of Governments from Washington State Employment Security Department.

*Suppressed to avoid disclosure.

WTU: Wholesale, Transportation, and Utilities

FIRE: Finance, Insurance and Real Estate

Table 11: Percent of Covered Employment by Sector, 2003

Education also plays an important role in the rural economy. The sector provides the largest

Jurisdiction	Manufacturing	WTU	Services	Retail	FIRE	Ed	Government	Construction & Resources	Total
Unincorporated County	67.3%	85.9%	60.6%	47.0%	31.4%	61.0%	80.7%	84.9%	65.8%
Rural Cities									
Black Diamond	*	1.5%	1.3%	1.1%	*	2.3%	1.3%	2.2%	1.5%
Carnation	*	1.3%	1.0%	1.2%	*	5.6%	1.9%	0.6%	2.0%
Duvall	4.3%	0.6%	4.6%	4.8%	6.6%	3.8%	1.3%	2.3%	3.6%
Enumclaw	18.3%	4.9%	15.6%	21.2%	51.1%	13.5%	6.7%	2.9%	13.7%
North Bend	1.2%	3.9%	8.0%	23.4%	5.1%	3.6%	4.5%	3.0%	7.2%
Skykomish	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	*	0.0%	0.8%	0.3%	*	0.2%
Snoqualmie	8.9%	1.9%	8.9%	1.3%	5.8%	9.4%	3.4%	4.3%	6.1%
Rural City Total	32.7%	14.1%	39.4%	53.0%	68.6%	39.0%	19.3%	15.1%	34.2%
Total Rural County	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: Puget Sound Regional Council of Governments from Washington State Employment Security Department.

*Suppressed to avoid disclosure.

number of jobs in Carnation and Skykomish (about one-half of total employment in the city), the second largest in Snoqualmie, and the third largest in Black Diamond and Duvall.

Enumclaw had the largest absolute number of jobs in the sector, 534, although services, retail and FIRE (finance, insurance and real estate) employed more people than did education.

Manufacturing is hardly present in the rural cities. Enumclaw has the largest number of jobs in this sector – 238, but these jobs constitute only 5.7% of total employment there. In no city does manufacturing represent more than 6.5% of total employment.

Household Income

Data covering rural King County household income, family and the per capita income by city, Vashon Island and the County are shown in Table 12: Median Household and Family Income and Per Capita Income. Similar data for Unincorporated Rural King County was unavailable.

In all but three cases (Enumclaw, Skykomish and Snoqualmie), 1999 household income in rural cities and Vashon Island exceed that for the County and in some instances by a significant amount. Median household income in Duvall at \$71,300 was 34% above the County's. Household income in Black Diamond was also relative high – \$67,092 or 26% above the County median. On the other hand, household income in Enumclaw was 18% below the median for the County.

The picture for median family income (households with related individuals) is similar to that of household incomes, although the three above-mentioned cities are joined by Carnation in being below County levels.

Based on household and family income, it would appear that the people in rural King County residents were wealthier than the average King County resident. However, per capita income data in Table 13: Comparison of Median Household and Family Income, 1999 would suggest differently. In all of the rural cities, income per person was below the County's, in the case of Enumclaw, as much as over 30% below. In three other cities, Carnation, Snoqualmie and Skykomish, per capita income was between 23% and 26% less than King County's per capita level.

The reason for this paradoxical situation is easy to grasp from Table 13: Comparison of Median Household and Family Income, 1999. Households in rural cities tend to be much larger as compared to the more urban-influenced county-wide average of 2.39. With the exception of Vashon Island and Skykomish, household size in rural King County cities exceeded the countywide average and exceeded that average by as much as 20% and 25% in Duvall and Carnation, respectively.

Table 12: Median Household and Family Income and Per Capita Income, 1999

Jurisdiction	House-holds	Median House-hold Income	Families	Median Family Income	Per Capita Income
Black Diamond	1,456	\$67,092	1,132	\$72,981	\$26,936
Carnation	636	\$60,156	496	\$64,167	\$21,907
Duvall	1,596	\$71,300	1,327	\$78,740	\$27,764
Enumclaw	4,317	\$43,820	2,851	\$56,270	\$20,596
North Bend	1,841	\$61,534	1,334	\$69,402	\$28,229
Skykomish	104	\$45,357	66	\$48,500	\$22,829
Snoqualmie	632	\$52,692	460	\$58,889	\$22,239
Vashon	4,193	\$58,261	2,861	N/A	\$31,983
King County	711,490	\$53,157	423,511	\$66,035	\$29,521

Sources: 2004 AGR; 2000 US Census

N/A – not available

Table 13: Comparison of Median Household and Family Income, 1999

Jurisdiction	Median Household Income: % Different From County	Median Family Income: % Different from County	Per Capita Income: % Different from County	Household Size	Household Size: % Different from County
Black Diamond	26.2%	10.5%	-8.8%	2.73	14.2%
Carnation	13.2%	-2.8%	-25.8%	2.98	24.7%
Duvall	34.1%	19.2%	-6.0%	2.88	20.5%
Enumclaw	-17.6%	-14.8%	-30.2%	2.52	5.4%
North Bend	15.8%	5.1%	-4.4%	2.53	5.9%
Skykomish	-14.7%	-26.6%	-22.7%	2.06	-13.8%
Snoqualmie	-0.9%	-10.8%	-24.7%	2.58	7.9%
Vashon	9.6%	1.5%	8.3%	2.08	-13.0%

Sources: 2004 AGR; 2000 US Census

Agriculture

King County farms tend to be relatively small. Over 80% of the county's farms reported by the data are below fifty acres (see Table 14: Farms by Size in King County, 2002). Only one in five county farms is between 50 and 999 acres. There may be one or more farms larger than 1,000 in the North Bend area, but the number has been suppressed by the US Department of Agriculture for reasons of confidentiality.

Comparison with the State underscores the small size of King County farms. About 55% of farms in the State are between 1-49 acres, while 32% of all Washington farms are between 50 – 999 acres. About 50% of the County's farms are located in the Enumclaw area.

King County farms tend to generate relatively small levels of income. Almost 90% of these farms have sales below \$50,000 a year. Only 12% of county farms have sales greater than \$50,000 a year. About 25% of all State of Washington farms generate sales of \$50,000 and more annually, while about 22% of US farms have sales equal to or in excess of \$50,000 per year.

About one-half of the farms in King County sell livestock, poultry and related products. The county's livestock and poultry farms tend to be small and generate relatively small amounts of sales (see Table 16: Value of All Livestock, Poultry, and Related Products Sold; 2002).

Almost 300 King County farms grow and harvest crops (Table 17: Size of Cropland Harvested, King County, 2002). Most of these farms are small as well, with cropland between 1 and 49 acres. Only about ten percent of the farms have cropland exceeding 50 acres.

Only about 5% of all farms are engaged in dairy production, but three-quarters of the dairy farms generate more than \$50,000 in annual revenues. Almost 200 farms (25% of all farms) sell cattle and calves, although most are small, only ten of them generate more than \$ 50,000 per year revenues (see Table 18: Sales from Milk, Other Dairy Products, Cattle and Calves, 2002).

Table 14: Farms by Size in King County, 2002

Location	All Farms	From 1 to 49 Acres	From 50 to 999 Acres	1,000 Acres or Greater
Black Diamond	20	17	*	0
Carnation	74	57	17	0
Duvall	65	50	15	0
Enumclaw	407	342	65	0
Fall City	36	21	15	0
Hobart	*	0	*	0
Maple Valley	88	83	5	0
North Bend	16	7	7	*
Preston	*	*	0	0
Ravensdale	19	15	*	0
Snoqualmie	5	*	*	0
Vashon	76	70	6	0
Total	806	662	130	*

Source: USDA, Census of Agriculture 2002

* Data withheld in situations of from one to four farms to avoid disclosure.

Table 15: Value of Agricultural Products Sold, 2002

Location	Black Diamond	Carnation	Duvall	Enumclaw	Fall City	Hobart	Maple Valley	North Bend	Preston	Ravensdale	Snoqualmie	Vashon	Total
Total Farms	20	74	65	407	36	*	88	16	*	19	5	76	806
Less than \$50,000	20	62	54	356	30	*	87	12	*	17	*	72	710
\$50,000 to \$249,999	0	10	5	24	5	0	*	*	0	*	*	*	44
\$250,000 or More	0	*	6	27	*	0	0	*	0	0	0	0	33

Source: USDA, Census of Agriculture, 2002

*Data withheld for categories with one to four farms.

Table 16: Value of All Livestock, Poultry, and Related Products Sold; 2002

Location	Black Diamond	Carnation	Duvall	Enumclaw	Fall City	Hobart	Maple Valley	North Bend	Preston	Ravensdale	Snoqualmie	Vashon	Total
Total Farms	6	33	37	222	14	*	46	*	0	9	*	27	394
Less than \$50,000	6	29	31	185	13	*	46	*	0	9	*	27	346
\$50,000 to 249,999	0	*	*	15		0	0	*	0	0	0	0	15
Over \$250,000	0	*	*	22	*	0	0	*	0	0	0	0	22

Source: USDA, Census of Agriculture, 2002

*Data withheld for categories with one to four farms.

Table 17: Size of Cropland Harvested, King County, 2002

Location	Black Diamond	Carnation	Duvall	Enumclaw	Fall City	Hobart	Maple Valley	North Bend	Preston	Ravensdale	Snoqualmie	Vashon	Total
Total Farms	6	45	20	113	18	*	20	12	*	*	*	56	290
1 to 49 Acres	6	41	16	96	12	*	20	8	*	*	*	54	253
50 to 499 Acres	0	*	*	17	6	0	0	*	0	0	0	*	23
Over 500 Acres	0	0	*	0	0	0	0	*	0	0	0	0	0

Source: USDA, Census of Agriculture, 2002

*Data withheld for categories with one to four farms.

Table 18: Sales from Milk, Other Dairy Products, Cattle and Calves, 2002

Location	Black Diamond	Carnation	Duvall	Enumclaw	Fall City	Hobart	Maple Valley	North Bend	Preston	Ravensdale	Snoqualmie	Vashon	Total
Total Farms Value of Dairy Products	0	*	10	32	*	0	0	*	0	0	0	0	42
Number with Dairy Sales > \$50,000	0	*	*	32	*	0	0	*	0	0	0	0	32
Total Farms Value of Cattle and Calves	*	13	13	139	10	*	14	*	0	*	*	7	196
Number with Cattle and Calves Sales > \$50,000	*	*	*	10	*	0	*	*	0	*	0	0	10

Source: USDA, Census of Agriculture, 2002

*Data withheld for categories with one to four farms.

Table 19: Special Income Sources for Local Farms, 2002

Location	Black Diamond	Carnation	Duvall	Enumclaw	Fall City	Hobart	Maple Valley	North Bend	Preston	Ravensdale	Snoqualmie	Vashon	Total
Farms with Farm-Related Sources of Income	*	20	11	93	*	0	18	*	*	5	0	15	162
Farms Selling Certified Organically Produced Commodities	0	7	*	7	*	0	*	0	0	0	0	*	14
Farms with Production Contracts	0	*		*	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0
Farms with Direct Sales	*	22	6	44	*	0	15	*	0	*	*	19	106

Source: USDA, Census of Agriculture, 2002

*Data withheld for categories with one to four farms.

Income generation is quite diversified in the rural area of King County (see Table 19: Special Income Sources for Local Farms, 2002). About 160-170 farms receive revenues from sales of products closely related to the principal functions of the farm business. However, a very small proportion of County farms, only about 20, are involved in a growing niche market – certified organic products. Direct sales to customers were another important farm revenue source. About 100 farms were involved in this type of activity.

Forestry

There were about 91 million board feet of timber harvested in King County in 2002; a decrease 35% over 2000 and 2001 levels (see Table 20: Timber Harvest by Ownership Class, King County, 2000-2002).

Forest industry harvesting decreased by a little over 51 million board feet between 2000 and 2002. The only increase in forest production over this time period was the increased harvesting of over 13 million board feet on State lands.

About 80% of the county's timber production came from private lands, with close to 46% from land owned by industry. State lands accounted for another 21% of the county's harvest.

King County's 2002 timber harvesting was a small portion (about three percent) of western Washington's total production of 2.7 billion board feet and the State's 3.6 billion board feet. The county's harvesting was far below the 503 million board feet harvested in Grays Harbor County, the most prolific timber producer in western Washington.

Table 20: Timber Harvest by Ownership Class, King County, 2000-2002

Ownership Class	2000	2001	2002	Change 2000-2002	% Change 2000-2002
<i>Thousand Board Feet, Scribner Rule</i>					
Native American	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Forest Industry	93,025	93,193	41,848	(51,177)	-55.0%
Private Large	19,914	20,044	19,062	(852)	-4.3%
Private Small	19,938	19,859	10,750	(9,188)	-46.1%
Total Private	132,877	133,096	71,660	(61,217)	-46.1%
State	5,728	10,981	19,006	13,278	231.8%
Other Non-federal	338	0	319	(19)	-5.6%
National Forest	1,561	79	0	(1,561)	-100.0%
Other Federal	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Total Public	7,627	11,060	19,325	11,698	153.4%
Total King County	140,504	144,156	90,985	(49,519)	-35.2%

Source: *Washington Timber Harvest*, various years. Washington State Department of Natural Resources

Table 21: Timber Harvest by Ownership Class and Species, 2002

Ownership Class	Douglas-Fir	Western Hemlock	True Firs	Cedars	Other Conifers	Red Alder	Other Hardwoods	Total Volume
<i>Thousand Board Feet, Scribner Rule</i>								
Native American	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Forest Industry	24,357	13,801	0	634	2,343	572	141	41,848
Private Large	5,596	9,378	0	784	1,796	1,064	444	19,062
Private Small	2,459	1,893	0	348	5,164	329	557	10,750
Total Private	32,412	25,072	0	1,766	9,303	1,965	1,142	71,660
State	9,693	4,752	1,140	1,140	0	1,711	570	19,325
Other Non-federal	183	102	0	0	0	0	34	319
National Forest	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Federal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Public	9,876	4,854	1,140	1,140	0	1,711	604	19,325
Total All Owners	42,288	29,926	1,140	2,906	9,303	3,676	1,746	90,985

Source: *Washington Timber Harvest 2002*. Washington State Department of Natural Resources

The species of timber harvested in King County in 2002 are listed by ownership in Table 21: Timber Harvest by Ownership Class and Species. About one-half of King County 2002 timber production (42.3 million board feet) was in Douglas-Fir with another 30 million board feet in Western Hemlock. Together, these two timber species accounted for 79% of the county's 2002 harvest.

Mineral Resources / Mining

Mining in King County consists of sand, gravel, rock or stone mining, as well as nonmetallic operations which can include silica, shale, crystal, and clay.

It is not possible to identify the actual number of employees in the King County mining economic sector because they are included in the construction and resources sectors reported by the Puget Sound Regional Council. Sand and gravel operators and permit holders are far more numerous than those involved in nonmetallic mining. The majority of the sand and gravel extracted is used in the construction industry and much of this mining occurs in the vicinity of Enumclaw, Ravensdale, Black Diamond, and Vashon.

Table 22: Private Sand and Gravel Operators / Permit Holders

Operator / Permit Holder	Property	Permitted Acreage	Permitted Depth (feet)
Cadman	Black Diamond, Brickroad, Redmond Site	182	30 to 150
Tim Corlis and Sons		133	150
Fiorito Brothers	Homestead Valley	40	300
Glacier Northwest	Maury Island Pit	243	380
Interwest Development Northwest	Fjetland	32.4	240
Jensen's Sand and Gravel	Neilson	26	100
Johnson Underwood Properties	Reid Pit	48	40
La Pianta Limited Partnership	Meade Pit	83	100
Lakeside Industries	Issaquah	277	250
Lloyd Enterprises	Corridor Group and Milton Pit		
Lone Star Northwest	Snoqualmie Pit	210	100
Maury Island Land Company	Reidel Maury Island	176	280
Miles Sand and Gravel company	Main Plant	40	150
Oldcastle Northwest	Baydo	664	225
Palmer Coking Coal Company	Morgan Kane Terrace and Wheeler Expansion	169	75 to 720
Procon Construction	Cedar Mountain	40	100
Quality Rock Products	Lake Francis I	80	25
R & H Mining, LLC	Hayes Sand & Gravel	58	125
Red-Samm Mining Company	Gun Club	80	45
Reid Sand and Gravel	J&B Gravel Co.	20.52	20
Schrod Mar, Inc.	Palmer	40	120
Stoneway Concrete	Cedar Shores, Hartman Pit, Lake Francis	536	25 to 125
Stoneway Rock and Recycling	Kangley Pit	610	100
Vashon Sand and Gravel	Maury Island Operation	36	30 to 150
Wakefield 1-90, LLC		29.5	15

Source: Washington State Department of Natural Resources, Directory of Washington Mines (August, 2001) pp.58-59.

There is no data available covering sand and gravel production, however the operators located in King County are displayed in Table 22: Private Sand and Gravel Operators / Permit Holders.

There are seven rock or stone mining operations greater than twenty acres in size in King County. Two of the largest sites are operated by firms that also produce sand and gravel; Cadman, Inc. (52 acres to a depth of 200 feet) and Stoneway Rock and Recycling (100 acres at a depth of 500 feet).

Of the nonmetallic mining operations, silica is used in glass manufacturing while shale is an input in making bricks. Table 23: Nonmetallic Mining Operations, 2001 shows the 2001 operations for silica and shale. Other nonmetallic operations for crystal and clay have been permitted in the county, however, neither one was actively mined in 2001.

Table 23: Nonmetallic Mining Operations, 2001

Commodity	Operator	Activity	Use / Comment
Silica	Reserve Silica Corp.	Mined and washed 1220,000 tons and shipped 78,000 tons of silica sand.	Most silica sand used in glass manufacturing in Seattle area.
Silica	Ash Grove Cement Co.	Mined 110,000 tons of silica.	Silica used in cement manufacturing.
Silica	James Hardie Building Products, Inc.	Mined 120,000 tons of silicified andesite. Shipped 20,000 tons to Lafarge Corp.	Andesite used for cement and fiber-cement manufacturing.
Shale	Mutual Materials Co.	Hauled 3,000 tons from stockpile from one site and mined / hauled 45,000 tons of shale from another property	Shale used in manufacturing of brick.
Crystal	Robert Jackson	Extracted mineral and crystal specimens from property, but no production	
Clay	Pacific Coast Coal Co.	Not active at the John Henry No. 1 Mine in 2001	

Source: Washington State Department of Natural Resources, Washington Geology, Vol. 30, No. 1-2 (July, 2002), pp.6-7

C. Commercial and Industrial Land Inventory

1. Rural Cities

Opportunities for development of new commercial and industrial uses in rural King County are primarily found within existing rural cities (including their Urban Growth Areas or UGAs), although rural neighborhood centers provide some potential for further expansion. A UGA designates land in proximity to a city that is currently unincorporated, but which will ultimately be annexed to that individual city. In addition, rural residential zones house a significant number of home occupations and home industries.

A rough guide to the amount of land suitable for future rural commercial and industrial growth is provided by King County's *Buildable Lands Evaluation Report*, produced in September 2002 with the cooperation of the County's cities. That report was produced in response to State Growth Management Act requirements and provides estimates of land available within the cities' boundaries and in their UGAs. However, the Buildable Lands Report only offers an approximation of development capacity. Although gross acreage is adjusted to account for land unavailable due to environmental considerations, public uses such as rights-of-way, and market conditions, the report does not effectively deal with such issues as infrastructure availability and capacity or the actual number parcels and / or space on the market for sale or lease at any one time.

However, the Buildable Lands Report does present the best current data on the potential for non-residential growth in rural cities.

Table 25: Net Acres Available for Development in Rural Cities, By City, September, 2002 displays the estimate of total net adjusted commercial and industrial acreage available for the rural cities of Black Diamond, Carnation, Duvall, Enumclaw, North Bend and Snoqualmie. It also demonstrates how environmental considerations, rights-of-way, and market factors are taken into account in order to provide an estimate of net developable acreage.

As shown in Table 24: Land Available for Development in Rural Cities, September, 2002, there are 639 acres available for commercial or industrial development or redevelopment in the six rural cities. Of this amount, 528 acres or 83% of the total are located within the rural cities' boundaries, while the remainder is located in their UGAs.

Table 24: Land Available for Development in Rural Cities, September, 2002

Land Use Variable	Gross Acres	Adjusted Net Acres	Percent of Total
Commercial Vacant	205.36	131.94	22.3%
Commercial Redevelopable	67.26	44.71	9.3%
Industrial Vacant	693.36	256.53	43.3%
Industrial Redevelopable	72.55	45.78	7.2%
Mixed Use Vacant	23.35	23.35	3.9%
Mixed Use Redevelopable	27.84	25.84	4.4%
Sub-Total: Current Supply of Commercial and Industrial Land	1,089.72	528.15	82.7%
UGA Commercial Vacant	17.13	7.28	1.1%
UGA Industrial Vacant	142.16	92.24	14.4%
UGA Mixed Use Vacant	20.73	8.97	1.4%
UGA Mixed Use Redevelopable	2.05	2.05	0.3%
Sub-Total: UGA Current Land Supply	182.07	110.54	17.3%
Total Commercial and Industrial Land	1,271.79	638.69	100.0%
Square Feet at a .25 Floor Area Ratio		6,955,367	
Square Feet at a .40 Floor Area Ratio		11,128,597	
Source: King County Budget Office, <i>King County Buildable Lands Evaluation Report</i> , September, 2002			
Note: The rural cities are Black Diamond, Carnation, Duvall, Enumclaw, North Bend, and Snoqualmie.			
UGA = Urban Growth Area			

Most of the land available for development is set aside in industrial zones. Over 60% of the total buildable lands in cities and UGAs (395 adjusted net acres) are potentially amenable to industrial development. The bulk of this land, 349 acres, is currently vacant.

Vacant land zoned for commercial and industrial uses constitutes the majority of buildable land currently within the rural cities. Seventy-eight percent (412 acres) of the in-city 528 acre total is undeveloped land set aside for industrial (257 acres), commercial (132 acres), or mixed use (23 acres) purposes. The remaining 116 acres, although currently having structures, are deemed prime for redevelopment.

Land in the UGA is primarily vacant and mostly set aside for industrial uses: 92 of the 111 UGA buildable acreage is zoned industrial.

To obtain a sense of the potential development of non-residential square footage in rural cities, two floor area ratios (FARs), i.e., the proportion of developed acreage taken up by buildings, were applied to adjusted net acres. Using a FAR of .25, typical of retail developments, almost seven million square feet of space would be available in rural cities and their UGAs.

Applying a more intense .40 FAR, more typical of office or industrial development, over eleven million square feet is potentially available. However, it is more likely that the actual amount of future square footage will be closer to the lower end of the square footage estimates.

The location of the net adjusted acreage for each of the rural cities including their UGAs is displayed in Table 25: Net Acres Available for Development in Rural Cities, by city, September 2002.

Black Diamond has the largest amount of developable land within the city limits, 178 acres or 34% of the total current supply. North Bend has the second largest amount of land developable city land, 98 acres or 19% of the total 528 acres, while Snoqualmie and Enumclaw each have 89 acres potentially available for development. Duvall has an additional 67 acres, but in Carnation there are only seven acres.

Black Diamond and North Bend have the bulk of the industrial land, although all of Black Diamond's land is within the city. North Bend's 172 industrial acres are about evenly divided between land within its boundaries and in its UGA.

Table 25: Net Acres Available for Development in Rural Cities, By City, September, 2002

Land Use Variable	Black Diamond	Carnation	Duvall	Enumclaw	North Bend	Snoqualmie	Total
Commercial Vacant	4.17	3.18	31.38	12.93	7.35	72.93	131.94
Commercial Redevelopable	14.75	0.71	13.15	12.23	0.00	3.87	44.71
Industrial Vacant	105.09	0.00	6.27	57.46	83.29	4.42	256.53
Industrial Redevelopable	20.61	0.00	10.62	6.71	0.00	7.84	45.78
Mixed Use Vacant	17.52	2.23	0.99	0.00	2.61	0.00	23.35
Mixed Use Redevelopable	15.52	1.07	4.74	0.00	4.51	0.00	25.84
Sub-Total: Current Supply of Commercial and industrial Land	177.66	7.19	67.15	89.33	97.76	89.06	528.15
Percent of Total	33.6%	1.4%	12.7%	16.9%	18.5%	16.9%	100.0%
UGA Commercial Vacant [1]	0.00	3.45	0.00	0.00	3.83	0.00	7.28
UGA Industrial Vacant	0.00	3.45	0.00	0.00	88.79	0.00	92.24
UGA Mixed Use Vacant	0.00	5.04	0.00	0.00	3.93	0.00	8.97
UGA Mixed Use Redevelopable	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.05	0.00	2.05
Sub-Total: UGA Current Land Supply	0.00	11.94	0.00	0.00	98.60	0.00	110.54
Percent of Total	0.0%	10.8%	0.0%	0.0%	89.2%	0.0%	100.0%
Total Commercial and Industrial Land	177.66	19.13	67.15	89.33	196.36	89.06	638.69
Percent of Total	27.8%	3.0%	10.5%	14.0%	30.7%	13.9%	100.0%
Square Feet at a .25 Floor Area Ratio	1,934,717	208,326	731,264	972,804	2,138,360	969,863	6,955,334
Square Feet at a .40 Floor Area Ratio	3,095,548	333,321	1,170,022	1,556,486	3,421,377	1,551,781	11,128,535

Source: King County Budget Office, *King County Buildable Lands Evaluation Report*, September, 2002

[1] UGA = Urban Growth Area

2. Unincorporated Rural King County

A detailed survey establishing an inventory of non-residential land uses in rural unincorporated King County, that is, in rural towns and neighborhood centers, was undertaken in the summer and fall of 2005. The survey was accomplished using the King County Assessor's property data base, the County's Geographic Information System, and sites visits of about 70% of parcels in the database. The results of this inventory by rural town or neighborhood business center are contained in Table 26: Developed and Undeveloped Zoned Commercial / Industrial Acreage, 2005.

The survey identified close to 1,900 acres of non-residential land either in use or zoned for non-residential uses. The bulk of this land, 1,128 acres, is already developed in retail, office and industrial uses. The remaining 756 acres are either vacant or have the potential for redevelopment.

This vacant acreage in unincorporated rural King County is similar to the gross acreage in rural cities found in the Buildable Lands Report and included in Table 26. Being gross acreage, this total was not adjusted for environmental considerations, market issues, or other inhibiting factors as this would require a detailed analysis of each parcel.

Table 26: Developed and Undeveloped Zoned Commercial / Industrial Acreage, 2005

Land Use/Zone	Bear Creek	East King County	Enumclaw ⁴	Newcastle	Preston	Tahoma	Vashon	Fall City	Other ^{5,6}	Total
Neighborhood Business Developed ⁷	16.98	8.77	104.21	16.27	2.41	19.60	93.64	8.08	282.62	552.58
Neighborhood Business Vacant ^{8,9}	0.00	14.57	47.45	1.09	0.00	9.37	33.31	6.73	20.54	133.06
Neighborhood Business Zoned Residential	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	32.73	0.00	2.38	0.00	35.11
Office Developed	15.21	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.37	0.51	0.00	16.09
Office Vacant	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Industrial Developed	6.51	0.00	0.00	0.00	121.69	0.53	65.16	0.77	329.68	524.34
Industrial Vacant	0.00	0.00	531.21	0.00	23.64	0.84	57.67	0.00	9.70	623.06
Total Developed	38.70	8.77	104.21	16.27	124.10	52.86	159.17	11.74	612.30	1,128.12
Total Vacant	0.00	14.57	578.66	1.09	23.64	10.21	90.98	6.73	30.24	756.12
Total Acres	38.70	23.34	682.87	17.36	147.74	63.07	250.15	18.47	642.54	1,884.24

⁴ Enumclaw industrial acreage consists entirely of Weyerhaeuser holdings in Forest Production District.

⁵ Includes: Snoqualmie Pass Rural Town, Tiger Mountain Neighborhood Business District, Auburn-Black Diamond Road area, Kummer, Auburn East / Pacific Raceways Industrial Area, Covington North Industrial Area, and Kangley Neighborhood Business Zone.

⁶ All this industrial acreage is located at the Pacific Raceway site.

⁷ Includes Commercial Business zoning.

⁸ Includes Commercial Business zoning.

⁹ Vacant includes vacant land, vacant buildings and potentially redevelopable parcels mostly parking lots.

Rural Economic Strategies Report Appendices

THE MISSION

The mission of the Rural Economic Strategies is to advance the long term economic viability of the rural area, with an emphasis on local farming and forestry, consistent with the character of rural King County.

**Prepared by the King County
Office of Business Relations and Economic Development
December 2005**

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APPENDIX A: Definitions and Abbreviations

Definitions

The following definitions are from the King County Comprehensive Plan Glossary

Rural Area

The Growth Management Act requires that counties designate a rural area in order to conserve the rural character and quality of the existing rural lands in Washington. King County's Rural Area contains very low-density residential development, commercial and industrial development, farms, forests, watersheds crucial for fisheries and flood control, mining areas, small cities and towns, historic sites and buildings, archaeological sites, and regionally important recreation areas.

Rural Character*

(14) "Rural character" refers to the patterns of land use and development established by a county in the rural element of its comprehensive plan:

- (a) In which open space, the natural landscape, and vegetation predominate over the built environment;
- (b) That foster traditional rural lifestyles, rural-based economies, and opportunities to both live and work in rural areas;
- (c) That provide visual landscapes that are traditionally found in rural areas and communities;
- (d) That are compatible with the use of the land by wildlife and for fish and wildlife habitat;
- (e) That reduce the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land into sprawling, low-density development;
- (f) That generally do not require the extension of urban governmental services; and
- (g) That are consistent with the protection of natural surface water flows and ground water and surface water recharge and discharge areas.

*Note: King County adopted the same definition of Rural Character as defined in the Washington State Growth Management Act.

Rural Cities

King County's rural cities are incorporated areas within the Rural Area whose local governments are involved in the region's planning processes on an equal legal basis with the suburban cities and Seattle. The incorporated rural cities are Black Diamond, Carnation, Duvall, Enumclaw, North Bend, Skykomish and Snoqualmie. (See Chapter Three, Rural Legacy and Natural Resource Lands)

Rural Growth

Rural Growth refers to residential, commercial, and industrial growth that is scaled to be compatible with, and maintains the traditional character of the Rural Area. Rural growth typically does not require urban

governmental services except in the case of some rural towns and to protect the environment as provided in this Comprehensive Plan. The basic elements of “Rural Character,” as defined by the King County Countywide Planning Policies are natural features, resource-based industries, rural towns, rural neighborhoods, rural infrastructure and services, open space system, rural housing, rural economy, and rural cities.

Rural Neighborhoods

Rural neighborhoods are small commercial developments, or in some cases, historic towns or buildings, that are too small to provide more than convenience shopping and services to surrounding residents. They generally do not have services such as water supply or sewage disposal systems any different from those serving surrounding rural residential development.

Rural Towns

Rural towns are unincorporated towns governed directly by King County. They provide a focal point for community groups such as chambers of commerce or community councils to participate in public affairs. The purposes of rural town designations within the Comprehensive Plan are to recognize existing concentrations of higher density and economic activity in rural areas and to allow modest growth of residential and economic uses to keep them economically viable into the future.

Rural Zoning

The rural zone is meant to provide an area-wide, long-term, rural character and to minimize land use conflicts with nearby agricultural, forest or mineral extraction production districts. These purposes are accomplished by:

- 1) limiting residential densities and permitted uses to those that are compatible with rural character and nearby resource production districts and are able to be adequately supported by rural service levels;
- 2) allowing small scale farming and forestry activities and tourism and recreation uses which can be supported by rural service levels and which are compatible with rural character; and
- 3) increasing required setbacks to minimize conflicts with adjacent agriculture, forest or mineral zones.

Abbreviations Used in Report

AAGR	Annual Growth Rate
APD	Agricultural Production District
BRED	(King County Office of) Business Relations and Economic Development
CAO	Critical Areas Ordinance
FAR	Floor Area Ratio
FIRE	Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate
FPD	Forest Production District
GMA	Growth Management Act
KC	King County
LMO	Livestock Management Ordinance
Mfg.	Manufacturing
NIPF	Non-industrial Private Forest Landowners
PUB	Public Utility District
RES	Rural Economic Strategies
SBA	Small Business Administration
UGA	Urban Growth Area
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
WSDOT	Washington State Department of Transportation
WSU	Washington State University
WTU	Wholesale, Transportation, and Utilities

APPENDIX B: Applicable King County Comprehensive Plan Policies

Agricultural Related Comprehensive Plan Policies

C. Farming in the Rural Area

The 1996 Farm and Forest Report provided a series of strategies for conserving farmland and sustaining farming within the designated Agricultural Production District where the prime agricultural soils are found, and recognized that there are also areas outside the APD where meaningful agricultural practices continue. The report identified areas where lands were in dairy or crop production and enrolled in the current use taxation program, determined that the low-density zoning in place in these areas was sufficient to protect the land base, and recommended that landowner incentive programs be focused there as well.

KCCP Policy R-111

The county should develop specific incentives to encourage agricultural activities in the remaining prime farmlands located outside the Agricultural Production District. These incentives could include tax credits, expedited permit review, reduced permit fees, permit exemptions for activities complying with best management practices, assistance with agricultural waste management or similar programs.

D. Equestrian Communities

King County recognizes the contributions of equestrian livestock husbandry, training, competition and recreation activities to the overall rural quality of life in King County. As growth occurs, open land to sustain livestock and existing or potential trail segments may be lost to uncoordinated land development and road improvements. Also, ESA requirements may limit livestock management choices and the location of new equestrian facilities on land constrained by large riparian corridors.

The equestrian community designation in the Non-Motorized Transportation Plan is based on the presence of some or all these factors in portions of King County's Rural Areas:

- a. Proximity to a regional-level trail, designated by the State of Washington, King County or a city, that is accessible to horses;
- b. Tracts of land on which horseback riding is formally sanctioned or to which equestrian access traditionally has been granted;
- c. Concentrations of residential lots or acreage on which horses are kept;
- d. Commercial or noncommercial stables, riding schools and arenas;
- e. Supporting industries including but not limited to tack shops, feed stores or veterinarians; and
- f. Riding or homeowner associations that promote equestrian activities.

While equestrian uses are permitted throughout the Rural Area, the Equestrian Communities Map identifies those areas where continued equestrian uses are particularly supported and provides a way for rural communities and the county to coordinate various actions to help equestrian activities remain sustainable in King County.

KCCP Policy R-112

King County should support the identified equestrian communities in the Rural Area by providing facilities on King County rights-of-way where not in conflict with the terms of utility easements to accommodate horse travel, by maintaining equestrian links, including multiple-use trails, where appropriate, and by adoption of supportive land use regulations for use of these areas for horsekeeping. King County will work with local communities to identify and protect multiple use trails and other public trails in the identified Equestrian Communities that support horse travel within the Rural Area.

KCCP Policy R-113

Soft-surface multiple-use trails in corridors separate from road rights-of-way are the preferred option for equestrian travel for safety reasons and to avoid conflicts with residential activities associated with the street. Existing off-road trails should be preserved during site development, with relocation as appropriate to accommodate development while maintaining trail connections. The King County Road Design Standards shall be revised, with input from representatives of the equestrian community, to accommodate safe equestrian travel within road rights-of-way. Where appropriate, capital improvement programs for transportation and park facilities shall also enable the use of new facilities by equestrians. Construction standards for multiple-use nonmotorized trails to be established in road rights-of-way within identified equestrian communities should assure a minimum eight-foot-wide gravel shoulder, or provide a trail separated from the driving lanes by a ditch or other barrier. Construction standards for soft-surface multiple-use nonmotorized trails in corridors separate from road rights-of-way shall be consistent with current trail construction and maintenance practices as promulgated by the U.S. Forest Service.

KCCP Policy R-114

King County's land use regulations should protect rural equestrian community trails by supporting preservation of equestrian trail links in Equestrian Communities, protection of livestock from intrusions from residential development, and encouraging subdivision layouts that preserve opportunities for keeping of horses. Representatives of the equestrian community shall be given the opportunity to review and monitor regulatory and programmatic actions by King County, such as rural area development regulations, that have the potential to affect equestrian uses.

KCCP Policy R-115

Equestrian trails should be recognized as "linear parks" for purposes of the county's Public Benefit Rating System.

KCCP Policy R-116

County departments negotiating trades or sales of county land shall determine whether any historically established trails exist on the property, and assure that those trails are retained or replaced to assure that key linkages to regional systems are not lost as a condition of the trade or sale.

Section V. Resource Lands

In 1994, the Agriculture Commission was established as a forum for farmers to take an active role in land use decisions, policies and regulations affecting commercial agriculture. The commission solicits input from agricultural agency technical advisors and others with land use and technical expertise, as well as other affected groups such as the Dairy Federation, Native American Tribes, and project proponents.

KCCP Policy R-502

The Agricultural Commission shall advise the King County Executive and Council on agricultural issues and programs, including, but not limited to:

- a. Existing and proposed legislation and regulations affecting commercial agriculture;
- b. Land use issues as they impact agriculture; and
- c. Ways to maintain, enhance and promote agriculture and agricultural products in the region.

King County shall continue to support the Agricultural Commission with staff and other resources.

Section V.A. Resource Conservation Strategy

In 1985, the King County Comprehensive Plan designated five Agricultural Production Districts and the Forest Production District. Subsequent planning efforts established minimum lot sizes and uses for these districts and their surrounding areas. These land use regulations are consistent with the requirements of the GMA to designate productive lands and to plan for adjacent and nearby land uses compatible with long-term commercial farming and forestry.

GMA requires designation of agricultural and forest lands of long-term commercial significance. Agricultural lands of long-term commercial significance are designated as Agricultural Production Districts and forest lands of long-term commercial significance are designated as the Forest Production District as shown on the Agricultural and Forest Lands Map.

KCCP Policy R-503

King County shall promote and support forestry, agriculture, mining and other resource-based industries as a part of a diverse, regional and sustainable economy.

KCCP Policy R-504

Well-managed forestry and agriculture practices are encouraged because of their multiple benefits, including natural resource protection.

KCCP Policy R-505

Farm lands, forest lands and mineral resources shall be conserved for productive use through the use of Designated Agriculture and Forest Production Districts and Designated Mineral Resource Sites where the principal and preferred land uses will be commercial resource management activities, and by the designation of appropriate compatible uses on adjacent rural and urban lands.

KCCP Policy R-506

Land uses, utilities and transportation facilities adjacent to Designated Agriculture and Forest Production Districts and Designated Mineral Resource Sites, shall be sited and designed to ensure compatibility with resource management.

KCCP Policy R-507

King County should facilitate the siting of industries, infrastructure and services that serve and are served by resource-based industries in close proximity to designated Agriculture and Forest Production Districts and Designated Mineral Resource Sites when adverse impacts and incompatibilities can effectively be mitigated.

KCCP Policy R-508

King County should expand access to preferential tax programs to encourage landowners to continue practicing farming and forestry and to help ensure retention of the resource land base. Preferential tax programs for resource uses should be publicized and marketed. Preferential tax programs applied to resource lands are indicative that the investment expectations of the owners are for the lands to be productive as resource lands. The effectiveness of these programs should be monitored and the programs modified as needed.

KCCP Policy R-509

King County shall employ a variety of innovative programs and incentives, tailored to the specific needs of each resource-based industry, to help maintain and enhance resource-based industries.

KCCP Policy R-510

King County should develop and employ effective means to inform affected property owners about nearby resource management activities. This may include, but not be limited to:

- a. Notice on title for properties within five hundred feet of designated agriculture, forestry, and mining lands;
- b. Signage for the Agricultural Production District, Forest Production District, Rural Forest Focus Areas; and
- c. Community meetings, and other public notification tools.

KCCP Policy R-511

King County shall work cooperatively with cities, federally recognized tribes, other public agencies, private utilities, resource managers, land owners and citizens to conserve public and private Natural Resource

Lands for long-term productivity and environmental protection in a consistent and predictable manner.

KCCP Policy R-512

Designated Forest and Agricultural Production District lands shall not be annexed by cities.

KCCP Policy R-513

King County should establish written agreements with agencies, tribes and other affected parties whose close coordination and collaboration are essential to effective implementation of resource management programs. Such agreements should serve to establish consensus and commitment to achieving specific resource management goals and to define the specific roles and responsibilities of each agency.

KCCP Policy R-514

King County should avoid duplication of federal and state regulations that apply to resource-based industries. However, King County reserves the authority to address issues of local concern with regard to resource-based activities and operations.

KCCP Policy R-515

Resource-based industries should use practices that protect the long-term integrity of the natural and built environment, adjacent land uses, and cultural resources that maintain the long-term productivity of the resource base. Resource industry practices should result in maintenance of ecosystem health and habitat.

KCCP Policy R-516

Habitat protection requirements should not fall disproportionately on land maintained in agriculture or forestry, and the costs of such protection shall not be disproportionately placed on the owners of such land.

KCCP Policy R-517

King County should be a leader in resource management by demonstrating environmentally sound agriculture and forestry on county-owned land.

KCCP Policy R-518

King County shall provide for integrated resource education through trail and sign systems linked with working farms, forests, and mines. Interpretation should:

- a. Provide historical perspective;
- b. Demonstrate current adaptive resource management practices (forestry, fisheries, wildlife, agriculture); and
- c. Explain economics of various resource uses.

Section C. Agriculture

Land suitable for farming is an irreplaceable natural resource. Since 1959, almost 60 percent of King County's prime agricultural land has been lost to urban and suburban development. Of 100,000 acres available for farming 40 years ago, today only 42,000 acres remain in agriculture.

Fortunately, the amount of agricultural land has stabilized due, in large part, to a variety of county policies and initiatives to conserve these commercially viable resource-based lands.

Agricultural lands and farming provide many benefits to the citizens of King County including scenic open space, a connection to our cultural heritage, fresh local foods and a diverse economy. In 2002, farmers in King County produced over \$94 million in agricultural sales. Commercial agricultural production, however, has declined by 30 percent in gross sales since 1978.

This section focuses on the county's efforts to maintain and enhance commercial agriculture for the value of local produce, dairy products, keeping livestock and for scenic and historic values. To meet the GMA requirement to maintain and enhance agriculture, a variety of methods and programs continue to be necessary. The policies call for King County to:

- Protect productive farmland by designation and zoning;
- Limit development to uses that are necessary to support commercial agriculture;
- Prevent or minimize land use conflicts between farming operations and adjacent land uses;
- Allow necessary infrastructure (markets, water, affordable housing, supply stores, technical services, tax incentives) that supports commercial agriculture; and
- Encourage farming practices that conserve soils and protect water quality, fisheries and wildlife.

Section 1. Protecting Agricultural Lands

In 1979, voters approved a \$50 million ballot measure to protect farmland threatened by development. The Farmland Preservation Program (FPP) became the first voter-approved measure in the nation to protect farmland in a metropolitan area. By purchasing the development rights, the FPP keeps farmland open and available through covenants that restrict development and limit the properties' uses exclusively for agriculture and open space. The covenants "run with the land" in perpetuity so the land is protected regardless of ownership. Under the FPP, the county owns the development rights; however, the lands remain in the private ownership of over 200 property owners. The county cannot sell or remove its interest in FPP lands with the exception of conveying public road or utility easements.

In 1995, the county approved an additional \$3 million to the purchase of additional development rights under the Farmland Preservation Program. In October 1999, the county formally recognized the 20th anniversary of the Farmland Preservation Program and its success to date in preserving over 12,800 acres of farmland for the generations of today and tomorrow.

KCCP Policy R-535

King County shall continue to implement the objectives of the Farmland Preservation Program. Protection of property purchased under the FPP shall be a high priority when balancing conflicting interests such as locating transportation, active recreation or utility facilities.

Agriculture is most productive in agricultural communities where neighbors support agriculture, where parcels are large enough for commercial agriculture and where labor, supplies and markets for farm products are available. King County's farm soils and most profitable farms are usually found in contiguous blocks with few nonagricultural uses. In 1985, King County established Agricultural Production Districts (APDs) with large lot zoning and specifying agriculture as the preferred use in these areas.

The Agricultural Production Districts, shown on the Agriculture and Forest Lands Map in this chapter, present the least number of land use conflicts for agriculture, contain agricultural support activities and provide the best environment for farming in King County. The five Agricultural Production Districts are: the Sammamish Valley, the Snoqualmie Valley, the Lower Green River Valley, the Upper Green River Valley and the Enumclaw Plateau. Most of the farmlands preserved under the FPP are found in these APDs.

KCCP Policy R-536

Agricultural Production Districts are blocks of contiguous farmlands where agriculture is supported through the protection of agricultural soils and related support services and activities. Roads and natural features are appropriate boundaries for Agricultural Production Districts to reduce the possibility of conflicts with adjacent land uses.

KCCP Policy R-537

King County should purchase additional development rights to farmland in the Agricultural Production Districts as funding becomes available.

Livestock, dairy and large-scale commercial row-crop operations require large parcels of land to allow for production which is profitable and sustainable. Generally, 35 acres is needed for full-time wholesale commercial production of such products. Specialty agricultural products, products that are direct-marketed and part-time farming enterprises generally need less acreage to be profitable.

KCCP Policy R-538

All parcels within the boundaries of an APD should be zoned Agricultural, either A-10 or A-35. If small parcels in the APD are not zoned for Agriculture, permitted nonresidential uses must not conflict with agricultural uses in the APD.

KCCP Policy R-539

Lands within Agricultural Production Districts should remain in parcels large enough for commercial agriculture. A residential density of one home per 35 acres shall be applied where the predominant lot size is 35 acres or larger, and a residential density of one home per 10 acres shall be applied where the predominant lot size is less than 35 acres.

KCCP Policy R-540

Agriculture should be the principal land use in the Agricultural Production Districts. Permanent new construction within districts shall be sited to prevent conflicts with commercial farming or other agricultural uses, and nonagricultural uses shall be limited. New development shall not disrupt agriculture operations and shall have a scale compatible with an active farming district.

KCCP Policy R-541

On-site housing for farm employees shall be allowed where this can be accomplished without unnecessarily removing land from agricultural use or conflicting with other public interests. King County should develop guidelines to allow on-site housing for farm employees, including guidelines that account for the restrictive covenants on properties in the Farmland Preservation Program.

Some of the highest quality salmon habitat in King County is found within Agricultural Production Districts (APDs). Additional protection or restoration of critical habitat within the APDs is likely to be recommended by Water Resources Inventory Area Salmon Conservation Plans. Protection and enhancement of existing salmon habitat is a resource based land use that should be included in all farm management plans. Specific habitat protection rules should not jeopardize the agricultural productivity within the APD. Aquatic habitat restoration or wetland mitigation projects should be limited in scale to achieve the objectives of the project while limiting fragmentation of farms and aquatic habitat. Many habitat restoration projects can be designed in a manner that provides benefits to both fish habitat and the agricultural landowner.

KCCP Policy R-542

Aquatic habitat restoration projects or floodplain restoration projects are allowed on agricultural lands that are unsuitable for direct agricultural production purposes, such as portions of property that have not historically been farmed due to soil conditions or frequent flooding, and which cannot be returned to productivity by drainage maintenance, or where the proposed project would result in a net benefit to agricultural productivity. Agriculture must remain the predominant use in the APDs and these projects shall not reduce the ability to farm in the area. Such projects may only be allowed on agricultural lands when there are no other suitable lands available and the project is supported by landowners who would be impacted by the project and when:

- a. The project is included in an approved Water Resources Inventory Area Plan, Farm Management Plan, Flood Hazard Reduction Plan or other functional plan; or
- b. The project would improve agricultural productivity within the APD.

KCCP Policy R-543

Maintaining the viability of farmlands is a high priority for King County. Within the Agricultural Production Districts, measures to protect threatened or endangered species shall be tailored to ensure working farms can continue to operate.

Two Agricultural Production Districts (APD) in or near urban areas, the Lower Green River Valley and Sammamish Valley, were designated in the 1985 Comprehensive Plan, and those designations have been retained. The development rights from many, but not all, of the parcels in these two districts have been purchased through the Farmlands Preservation Program. The Lower Green APD is completely surrounded by urban designated land and as such, functions as both prime agriculture land and urban separator.

KCCP Policy R-544

King County commits to preserve Agricultural Production District parcels in or near the Urban Growth Area because of their high production capabilities, their proximity to markets, and their value as open space.

KCCP Policy R-545

The Lower Green River Agricultural Production District is a regionally designated resource that is to remain in unincorporated King County. The Lower Green River Agricultural Production District functions as an urban separator between the cities of Kent and Auburn. King County may contract with other jurisdictions to provide some local services to this area as appropriate.

Parks and farms are not necessarily good neighbors, since park users can trespass and damage crops, animals and farm equipment. Recreation near and within districts can be planned to prevent trespass. For example, a park located across a river or ravine from an Agricultural Production District (APD) or a farm would have a pleasant view of farmland without encouraging trespass.

KCCP Policy R-546

Active recreational facilities should not be located within Agricultural Production Districts. When new parks or trails are planned for areas within or adjacent to Agricultural Production Districts, King County should work with farmers to minimize impacts to farmland and agricultural operations.

Public road and utility projects within and through Agricultural Production Districts must be designed to prevent disruption to agriculture. For example, roads shall have adequate shoulders and signs to protect farm equipment and alert faster vehicles to the presence of farming activity. Therefore, road and utility district capital facilities and plans, including water, waste water and drainage, need to ensure that services are consistent with preservation of long-term agriculture. (Chapter Eight, Facilities and Services, contains policies requiring special district plans to be consistent with land use plans.)

KCCP Policy R-547

Public services and utilities within and adjacent to Agricultural Production Districts (APDs) shall be designed to minimize significant adverse impacts on agriculture and to maintain total farmland acreage and the area's historic agricultural character:

- a. Whenever feasible, water lines, sewer lines and other public facilities should avoid crossing Agricultural Production Districts. Installation should be timed to minimize negative impacts on seasonal agricultural practices; and
- b. Road projects planned for the Agricultural Production Districts including additional roads or the widening of roads should be limited to those needed for safety and which benefit agricultural uses. Where possible, arterials should be routed around the APDs. Roads that cross APDs should be aligned, designed and maintained to minimize negative impacts on agriculture, and to support farm traffic; and
- c. In cases when public or privately owned facilities meeting regional needs must intrude into Agricultural Production Districts, they should be built and located to minimize disruption of agricultural activity.

KCCP Policy R-548

Lands can be removed from the Agricultural Production Districts only when it can be demonstrated that:

- a. Removal of the land will not diminish the productivity of prime agricultural soils or the effectiveness of farming within the local APD boundaries; and
- b. The land is determined to be no longer suitable for agricultural purposes.

In addition to meeting these two tests, removal of the land from the APD may only occur if it is mitigated through the addition of agricultural land abutting the same APD of equal acreage and of equal or greater soils and agriculture value.

Section 2. Sustaining Agriculture and Farming

King County has made a significant investment in preserving farmland for agriculture and open space uses. The next step is to help existing and future farmers maintain and operate their farms and inform consumers and businesses, such as restaurants, of the benefits of locally grown foods. In order to further maintain and enhance commercial farming on small farmland parcels, farmers and prospective farmers must have access to information on marketing and production strategies for small acreages, the potential for specialty crops and sustainable farming techniques.

KCCP Policy R-549

King County shall work with and provide support to the work of Washington State University Cooperative Extension for technical and marketing assistance for small-scale commercial farmers.

KCCP Policy R-550

King County shall continue to support innovative initiatives, such as the Puget Sound Fresh and Farm Link Programs, to promote and enhance agriculture in King County.

KCCP Policy R-551

The county should develop specific incentives to encourage agricultural activities in the remaining prime farmlands located outside the Agricultural Production District. These incentives could include tax credits, expedited permit review, reduced permit fees, permit exemptions for activities complying with best management practices or similar programs.

KCCP Policy R-552

King County shall develop an Agricultural Building Permit with an expedited review process and reduced fees for structures necessary for farm operations.

King County recognizes the importance of adding value to and direct sales of agricultural products as a way to keep agriculture viable in an urban landscape. King County's agriculture program works with farmers to encourage them to add value to their products by processing, packaging, and selling them directly to the consumer.

KCCP Policy R-553

Agricultural processing, packing and direct sales are considered agricultural activities and should be allowed at a size and scale appropriate to the zone in which they are operating. King County shall work with local and state health departments to develop regulations supporting these activities.

Agricultural practices modify the natural environment in order to produce food or fiber or maintain livestock for human use. Ideally, practices that maintain the productivity of the lands also protect environmental quality. Farmers, technical advisors and environmental regulators must work together to understand the relationships between production practices, environmental protection and profitability. These practices, referred to as best management practices, are designed to prevent erosion, retain riparian vegetation, avoid stream bank collapse, properly dispose of animal wastes, safely use and dispose of pesticides and prevent excessive surface water runoff.

KCCP Policy R-554

King County shall provide incentives, educational programs and other methods to encourage agricultural practices which maintain water quality, protect public health, protect fish and wildlife habitat, protect historic resources and prevent erosion of valuable agricultural soils while maintaining the functions needed for agricultural production.

Forestry Related Comprehensive Plan Policies

Section V, Resource Lands

The Rural Forest Commission was established in 1997 to represent the diversity of forest interests in King County. The Commission reviews the development and implementation of strategies, programs, policies and regulations that benefit forestry and advises the county on ways to preserve rural forests and promote rural forestry.

KCCP Policy R-501

The Rural Forest Commission shall advise the King County Executive and Council on the development of innovative programs, policies and regulations that benefit forestry and that encourage the retention of the forest land base in King County. King County shall continue to support the Rural Forest Commission with staff and other resources.

Section B. Forestry

King County forestlands provide local, regional and national benefits that are basic to our quality of life. In addition to supplying a variety of wood and other products, forests emit oxygen, supply pure water, control flooding and soil erosion, enhance groundwater recharge, provide habitat for innumerable plant and animal species and offer scenic vistas and recreational opportunities. King County's forests provide employment in wood, paper, recreation, tourism and fishing industries. In sum, properly managed forests are fundamental to a healthy, diverse economy and environment.

The growth in human population has resulted in the loss of forestlands through conversion to nonforest uses. Increasing demands are being placed upon the remaining forest land base to provide goods, recreational opportunities and ecological functions. To address these challenges, forest managers are embracing more broad-based management methods and strategies that encompass ecosystems, landscapes and watersheds, while continually incorporating new scientific information to improve these approaches. Their efforts, together with the collective foresight and dedication of landowners, interest groups, tribes, citizens and agencies, are needed to ensure that King County's forests continue to contribute to a sustainable way of life for present and future generations.

The first step to maintain and enhance the commercial forest industry is to protect the forest land base. Second, an ecosystem approach to forest management that provides for long-term ecosystem health and productivity and addresses cumulative impacts on nontimber resources should be explored. Third, commercial forestry must be supported and encouraged by minimizing land use conflicts and offering incentives. Finally, forestland conversions that do occur must be managed to minimize environmental degradation.

Section 1. Protecting Forest Lands

The purpose of the Forest Production District is to prevent intrusion of incompatible uses, manage adjacent land uses to minimize land use conflicts and prevent or discourage conversion to nonforestry-based

uses. A comparison of the area of forestland converted since 1987 inside the Forest Production District with the area converted outside the district indicates that landowners inside the Forest Production District are committed to long-term forestry. It also indicates that designation and zoning of commercial forest lands help to discourage subdivision and conversion.

Sixty percent of the land area in King County is within the designated Forest Production District (FPD). The FPD comprises 1,300 square miles (825,000 acres) of forestland in east King County.

About 70% of the FPD is in public ownership: parts of the Alpine Lakes Wilderness Area, Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, state and county parks, Washington State Department of Natural Resources, and watersheds for the cities of Seattle and Tacoma.

Commercial forestry is conducted on approximately 250,000 acres in private ownership and on another 277,000 acres of state and federal forestlands. Most of this land is held in large contiguous blocks. At this larger scale, it is easier to manage for multiple purposes such as habitat and long-term forest health.

KCCP Policy R-519

The Forest Production District is comprised of and shall remain in large blocks of contiguous forest lands where the primary land use is commercial forestry. Other resource industry uses, such as mining and agriculture, should be permitted within the Forest Production District when managed to be compatible with forestry.

KCCP Policy R-520

The Forest Production District is a long-term designation. Lands may be removed from the Forest Production District only through a subarea planning process, and only to recognize areas with historical retail commercial uses.

The policies in this section allow for very limited residential uses in the designated Forest Production District, consistent with the objective of continuing forestry as the primary land use. For example, residences may be appropriate to permit forest managers to live on their land. King County zoning and subdivision regulations establish a large parcel size to promote efficient forest operations and to reduce incompatible residential development. Although the zoning calls for an 80-acre minimum lot size, many smaller lots were created prior to application of the zoning. Proliferation of residences in the FPD makes commercial forestry less viable.

KCCP Policy R-521

King County is committed to maintaining working forestland in the FPD, and shall continue to work with landowners and other stakeholders to promote forestry, reduce uses and activities that conflict with resource uses and recognize forestland values.

KCCP Policy R-522

To reduce conflicts with resource uses, a forest management plan shall be required as a condition of development for any residential uses. Accessory dwelling units shall not be allowed in the FPD.

KCCP Policy R-523

Structures within the Forest Production District should be sited to maintain the productivity of the district. Site plan requirements should limit impervious surface, provide for fire control, protect domestic water supply and prevent conflicts with forest management.

King County can further protect commercial forestlands and prevent conflicts by working with other public agencies and service providers to consolidate lands and to locate infrastructure facilities to prevent or minimize intrusions. Such actions can also improve the owner's capacity to protect fish and wildlife habitat and other natural resources.

KCCP Policy R-524

In consultation with federally-recognized tribes and other affected agencies and landowners, King County should support land trades that result in consolidated forest ownership and work with forest managers to identify and develop other incentives for continued forestry.

KCCP Policy R-525

King County opposes the establishment or expansion of special purpose taxing districts and local improvement districts in the Forest Production District, and shall not grant new or expanded franchises for utilities in the Forest Production District, unless demonstrated that they directly benefit forestry or are necessary for transmission of power or water.

Forest lands have tremendous recreational and aesthetic value. For example, Forest Production District lands are included within the Mountains-to-Sound Greenway along the I-90 corridor. Opportunities for hiking and other forms of outdoor recreation exist within the working forests that are part of the Greenway. (This concept is described in more detail in Chapter Four, Environment, and Chapter Five, Parks, Open Space and Cultural Resources.) Access to Natural Resource Lands must be carefully managed, however, to prevent conflict with natural resource goals. For example, open gate policies allowing public access may be incompatible with fish and wildlife protection goals and sometimes may interfere with forestry operations by allowing such activities as garbage dumping, vandalism and timber theft.

KCCP Policy R-526

Public and private forest owners are encouraged to provide for recreational, educational and cultural uses when compatible with forest protection.

Recreational and institutional developments, such as conference centers, ski areas and associated hotels, allow more people to enjoy the aesthetic benefits of forest lands. Such facilities are acceptable if located in areas of existing development, such as Snoqualmie Pass, and their operation and use are restricted adequately to minimize conflict with resource lands. Major recreational or institutional development sites can

adversely affect the Forest Production District because they reduce the forest land base and conflict with other resource management goals.

KCCP Policy R-527

No master planned resorts shall be permitted in the Forest Production District. New or expansion of existing recreational or institutional uses in the Forest Production District may be permitted if compatible with long-term forestry, interests of federally-recognized tribes and other resource management goals.

Adverse environmental impacts associated with forest practices have the potential to heal over time, whereas those associated with development are usually irreversible. For this reason, forest lands being converted to nonforest uses must be held to higher land clearing and grading standards than those that apply under the Forest Practices Act must be used, for example, to protect surface and groundwater quality and quantity, control stormwater runoff and minimize damage to fish and wildlife habitat.

When applying for a forest practice permit, a landowner must state whether the land is to be retained in forest use or converted to a nonforest use. The Forest Practices Act, as amended in 1997, requires local jurisdictions to impose a six-year development moratorium on any properties for which the forest practice application did not state the intention to convert to a nonforest use, unless the application contains a conversion option harvest plan approved by the local jurisdiction.

KCCP Policy R-528

King County shall impose a six-year development moratorium for landowners who do not state their intent to convert at the time of Forest Practice Application or who do not harvest the site according to a King County approved Conversion Option Harvest Plan. King County shall develop a list of allowable exceptions from the development moratorium and shall ensure that potential buyers of properties subject to the moratorium are alerted to the moratorium.

Landowners choosing to convert their land to nonforest uses also must state their intent on the Forest Practice Application and, as provided in the Forest Practices Act, must conduct their forest practices according to applicable local government regulations. If a landowner intends to convert their land to a nonforest use, they must submit a Forest Practices Application to King County and meet all King County standards.

KCCP Policy R-529

King County should continue to work with all affected parties and the Washington Department of Natural Resources to improve the enforcement of forest practice regulations in the urban and rural areas, and to ensure that landowners comply with county regulations when they are converting portions of the site to a nonforest use. Harvesting of forest lands for the purpose of converting to nonforestry uses shall meet all applicable county standards for clearing and sensitive areas management.

Section 2. Promoting Forest Management

King County has worked with state, federal, and private landowners on multiparty resource plans, such as the Middle Fork Snoqualmie Plan, the plan for Rattlesnake Ridge, and numerous watershed planning efforts. There will continue to be opportunities for interagency cross-ownership cooperation, which will result in improved resource management and conservation.

KCCP Policy R-530

Working with public and private forest land managers, King County shall encourage long-term forest productivity and the protection of land and water resources by participating in collaborative, multi-ownership planning efforts.

KCCP Policy R-531

King County promotes forest management that achieves long-term forest health, protection of watersheds, sensitive areas and habitat to support fish and wildlife populations, protection of threatened and endangered species, and preservation and economic viability of working forests.

KCCP Policy R-532

King County should work with the King County Rural Forest Commission to conduct a demonstration project for tree removal to reduce fire hazard in the Rural Area. The demonstration project should allow for a community based project in a carefully selected area using best management practices.

KCCP Policy R-533

King County shall encourage the development of private/public partnerships that provide incentive for landowners to practice innovative, fish-friendly forestry and that can help ensure retention of the forest resource land base in perpetuity.

An example of such a partnership is the Mountains-to-Sound Greenway Biosolids Forestry Program, which includes King County, Washington State Department of Natural Resources, the Greenway Trust, the University of Washington and the Weyerhaeuser Company. One of the elements of this program involves the acquisition of forestlands that are vulnerable to residential and commercial development. Lands are acquired by a combination of county funds and federal Forest Legacy funds and then transferred to the State DNR for management. By deed, these lands stay in forest resource use in perpetuity and are managed according to the state's Habitat Conservation Plan. Seventy-five percent of all revenues generated are returned to King County. The lands that have been acquired help to form the block of public ownership along I-90, providing wildlife corridors, opportunities for trails and recreation, and the water quality protection provided by forest cover.

In addition to landscape-level planning and analysis, resource managers should identify specific areas in their forest ownership that are degraded or negatively impacting aquatic resources. Examples of such areas are logging roads or gravel mines no longer needed and scheduled to be abandoned or riparian zones that are not sufficiently vegetated. Organic soil amendments, when properly used, can greatly enhance vegetative

growth and restore productivity to these sites, thus protecting fish and other aquatic resources. The use of recycled organic wastes generated in King County closes the recycling "loop" and helps us sustain the productivity of our resource lands.

KCCP Policy R-534

King County encourages the use of recycled, organic-based soil amendments and fertilizers in forest ecosystems, which can reduce erosion and sedimentation into streams, increase water-holding capacity of soils, stimulate the growth of trees and other vegetation and enhance fish and wildlife habitat. King County shall work with the general public and private and public forestland owners to encourage the selective and appropriate use of these materials for ecosystem enhancement and restoration.

One of the most successful efforts already underway is the use of the county's biosolids to fertilize public and private forests and the use of biosolids compost to help restore old logging roads in the Mountains-to-Sound Greenway in eastern King County. Volunteers from many local youth and environmental groups, including Earthcorp, are involved in this program, which involves removal of the logging roads, restoration of the natural slope of the land, and the use of compost to speed vegetation growth.

Home-Based Businesses Related Comprehensive Plan Policies

Section 3. The Rural Economy

An economic development strategy for the Rural Area can support and advance the unique characteristics of rural King County. It is critically important for the Rural Area to sustain the farming and forestry industries. The strategy needs to recognize the role of home businesses and industries as well as a range of other businesses and economic clusters that can be compatible with rural lifestyles and the rural character of the area. Rural economic development means maintaining and, where possible, increasing the flow of income to rural households and revenues to rural businesses and families.

KCCP Policy R-106

King County recognizes and supports home occupations, home industries, and other small businesses that provide services to rural residents and are part of traditional rural economic activities and lifestyles found in King County's Rural Area. The county shall review its regulations and programs to preserve this component of the County's Rural Area. The Executive shall provide this analysis of the regulations and programs, along with any recommended code changes, for review by the King County Council by December 31, 2005.

Section D. Nonresidential Uses

While low-density residential development, farming and forestry are the primary uses in the Rural Area, some compatible public and private uses are appropriate and contribute to rural character. Compatible uses might include small, neighborhood churches, feed and grain stores, and home

occupations such as small day care facilities or veterinary services. In addition, it may be necessary to locate some public facilities in rural areas, such as utility installations that serve rural homes. Any allowed nonresidential uses should be designed to blend with rural residential development and resource uses.

KCCP Policy R-221

Nonresidential uses in the Rural Area shall be limited to those that:

- a. Provide convenient local services for nearby residents;
- b. Require location in a Rural Area;
- c. Support natural resource-based industries;
- d. Provide adaptive reuse of significant historic resources; or
- e. Provide recreational opportunities that are compatible with the surrounding Rural Area.

These uses shall be sited, sized and landscaped to complement rural character as defined in policy R-101, prevent impacts to the environment and function with rural services including on-site wastewater disposal.

Rural Towns and Neighborhood Centers Related Comprehensive Plan Policies

Chapter Three, Rural Legacy and Natural Resource Lands

Subheading, King County's Rural Communities:

King County's Rural Area, including communities such as the Hobart Plateau, Vashon Island, Snoqualmie Valley and Enumclaw Plateau, contains predominantly low-density residential development, farms, forests, watersheds crucial for both fisheries and flood control, mining areas, small cities and towns, historic sites and buildings, archaeological sites, and regionally important recreation areas. (Page 3-1)

KCCP Policy R-221

Nonresidential uses in the Rural Area shall be limited to those that:

- a. Provide convenient local services for nearby residents;
- b. Require location in a Rural Area;
- c. Support natural resource-based industries;
- d. Provide adaptive reuse of significant historic resources; or
- e. Provide recreational opportunities that are compatible with the surrounding Rural Area.

These uses shall be sited, sized and landscaped to complement rural character as defined in policy R-101, prevent impacts to the environment and function with rural services including on-site wastewater disposal.

KCCP Policy R-222

Golf facilities shall be permitted when located outside of Rural Forest Focus Areas, Regionally Significant Resource Areas and Locally

Significant Resource Areas, as a conditional use, in the RA-2.5 and RA-5 zones.

Section B. Rural Towns

Rural Towns are unincorporated towns governed directly by King County, but may provide a focal point for community groups such as chambers of commerce or community councils to participate in public affairs.

The purposes of the Rural Town designation are to recognize existing concentrations of higher density and economic activity in Rural Areas, whether by virtue of historical rural settlements or redesignation of an urban commercial center; provide a physical focus for the historic identity of rural communities; and to allow for modest growth of residential and economic uses within these designations if supported by the community and adequate utilities and other public services are available.

Although higher-density development in Rural Towns may require public sewers, applying the full range of urban development standards (e.g. for street improvements or landscaping) may not be necessary, and may not be consistent with the historic character of these communities. Although Rural Towns also may in some circumstances develop at densities similar to those in the Urban Growth Area or in rural cities, they are considered part of the Rural Area for purposes of the GMA, do not provide significant growth capacity, and are not subject to the growth targets adopted for the UGA.

KCCP Policy R-403

King County hereby designates the Rural Towns of Fall City, Snoqualmie Pass and the Town of Vashon as unincorporated Rural Towns. These historical settlements in unincorporated King County should provide services and a range of housing choices for Rural Area residents. The boundaries of the designated Rural Towns are shown on the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map. Adjustments to these boundaries shall only occur through a subarea planning process, and shall not allow significant increases in development potential or environmental impacts. No new Rural Towns are needed to serve the Rural Area.

KCCP Policy R-404

Commercial and industrial development that provides employment, shopping, and community and human services that strengthen the fiscal and economic health of rural communities should locate in Rural Towns if utilities and other services permit.

KCCP Policy R-405

Rural Towns may contain higher-density housing than permitted in the surrounding Rural Area, and should provide affordable and resource-worker housing if utilities and other services permit. Development density in Rural Towns may approach that achieved in Rural Cities.

The policies in this section apply only to the unincorporated Rural Towns. King County encourages rural cities to adopt land use policies and development standards that protect and enhance their historical character.

KCCP Policy R-406

Rural Towns serve as activity centers for the Rural Area and may be served by range of utilities and services, and may include several or all of the following land uses, if supported by necessary utilities and other services and if scaled and designed to protect rural character:

- a. Retail, commercial and industrial uses to serve the surrounding Rural Area population and to provide support for resource industries and tourism;
- b. Residential development, including single-family housing on small lots as well as multifamily housing and mixed-use developments;
- c. Other commercial and industrial uses, including commercial recreation and light industry; and
- d. Public facilities and services such as community services, churches, schools, and fire stations.

KCCP Policy R-407

Sewers may be allowed in Rural Towns if necessary to solve existing water quality and public health problems which cannot be addressed by other methods, provided that any extension of sewer mains from urban areas to serve a rural town shall be tightlined systems designed to not serve any intervening lands. All alternatives shall be exhausted before sewers may be allowed. Rural towns shall not be enlarged to facilitate provision of sewers.

Rural and urban residents alike value the historic character of King County's Rural Towns. New development can enhance the character and valuable features of Rural Towns through careful design and location.

KCCP Policy R-408

Rural Towns should be compact, promoting pedestrian and nonmotorized travel while permitting automobile access to most commercial and industrial uses. New development should be designed to strengthen the desirable characteristics and the historic character of the town, be supported by necessary public facilities and services, and be compatible with historic resources and nearby rural or resource uses. New industrial uses should locate where they do not disrupt pedestrian or bicycle traffic in established retail areas of town or conflict with residential uses.

C. Rural Neighborhoods

Rural neighborhoods are small commercial developments, or in some cases, historic towns or buildings, that are too small to provide more than convenience shopping and services to surrounding residents. They generally do not have services such as water supply or sewage disposal systems any different from those serving surrounding rural development. Examples of rural neighborhoods include the store at Stillwater on the Carnation-Duvall Road, the town of Cumberland on the Enumclaw Plateau, and Preston.

KCCP Policy R-409

The rural neighborhoods designated on the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map are small-scale business areas that should provide convenience shopping and services for the surrounding community. No new rural neighborhoods are needed to serve the Rural Area. Expansion of the boundaries of the existing rural neighborhoods shall not be permitted except through the subarea plan process.

The designated rural neighborhoods shown on the Land Use map are:

Bear Creek: Cottage Lake and Redmond-Fall City Road/236th NE

East King County: Greenwater, Baring and Timberlane Village

Enumclaw: Cumberland, Krain's Corner and Newaukum

Newcastle: Coalfield and East Renton Plateau

Snoqualmie: Preston and Stillwater

Tahoma/Raven Heights: Maple Valley, Hobart, Ravensdale and North Cedar Grove Road

Vashon: Burton, Dockton, Tahlequah, Portage, Heights Dock, Jack's Corner, Vashon Center, Vashon Service Center, Vashon Heights and Maury Island Service Center

The policies in this section are based on a recognition of the limited size of most rural neighborhoods, the limited utilities and other services available to them, and a desire to preserve their existing character and relationship to the surrounding rural community.

KCCP Policy R-410

Rural neighborhoods should accommodate only small-scale retail, community and human services and personal service uses that provide convenience shopping and services to nearby Rural Area residents. If land suitable for residential development is included within the boundaries of a rural neighborhood, it should be zoned for rural residential development consistent with the residential development policies of this plan.

KCCP Policy R-411

King County should adopt commercial development standards for rural neighborhoods that facilitate economic reuse of existing structures, minimize increases in impervious surfaces and encourage retention of historic character and scale. Urban-level parking, landscaping and street improvement standards are not appropriate for Rural Neighborhoods.

D. Nonresource Industrial Uses and Development Standards in the Rural Area

There are two existing industrial areas in the Rural Area containing multiple industrial uses on several sites. One is located within the southwest portion of the Town of Vashon and the second is a designated industrial area adjacent to the rural neighborhood of Preston. The Preston Industrial Area recognizes an existing concentration of industrial uses that contributes to the economic diversity of the Rural Area, but expansion of this industrial area beyond the identified boundaries is not permitted (see policy C-941).

KCCP Policy R-412

New industrial uses in the Rural Area shall be permitted only in Rural Towns and in the designated industrial area adjacent to the Rural Neighborhood of Preston.

In order to preserve rural character and protect sensitive natural features, new rural industrial development needs to be of a scale and nature that is distinct from urban industrial development. The scale and intensity and many of the uses allowed in urban industrial development are not appropriate for rural industrial areas. The following policy applies to all new industrial development in the Rural Area.

KCCP Policy R-413

Development regulations for nonvested industrial development in the Rural Area shall require the following:

- a. Greater setbacks, and reduced building height, floor/lot ratios, and maximum impervious surface percentage standards in comparison to standards for urban industrial development.
- b. Maximum protection of sensitive natural features, especially salmonid habitat and water quality.
- c. Building and landscape design that respects the aesthetic qualities and character of the Rural Area, and provides substantial buffering from the adjoining uses and scenic vistas.
- d. Building colors and materials that are muted, signs that are not internally illuminated, and site and building lighting that is held to the minimum necessary for safety.
- e. Heavier industrial uses, nonvested industrial uses producing substantial waste byproducts or wastewater discharge, or nonvested paper, chemical and allied products manufacturing uses in the urban industrial zone shall be prohibited.
- f. Industrial uses requiring substantial investments in infrastructure such as water, sewers or transportation facilities shall be scaled to avoid the need for public funding of the infrastructure.

The intent of this policy is to preclude expansion of the industrial area beyond the identified boundaries and to ensure that new development (not previously constructed or vested) in the industrial area meets rural character standards. Site design, landscaping, design and construction of internal and access roads and building scale should reinforce the set boundaries and rural nature of the industrial area to further discourage future industrial expansion beyond the industrial boundary.

There are also existing, isolated industrial sites in the Rural Area which are recognized, but are not appropriate for new industrial uses. Further expansion of these isolated industrial uses is not encouraged, and therefore they are not zoned Industrial.

KCCP Policy R-414

Existing industrial uses in the Rural Area outside of Rural Towns or the designated industrial area adjacent to the Rural Neighborhood of Preston shall be zoned rural residential but may continue if they qualify as legal, nonconforming uses.

Rural Cities Related Comprehensive Plan Policies**Section A. Rural Cities**

King County's rural cities are incorporated areas whose local governments are involved in the region's planning processes on an equal legal basis with the suburban cities and Seattle. The incorporated rural cities are Black Diamond, Carnation, Duvall, Enumclaw, North Bend, Skykomish and Snoqualmie.

The Growth Management Act stipulates that rural cities and their Urban Growth Areas are to be treated as part of the Urban Growth Area. The Countywide Planning Policies also provide for urban land uses and densities and urban services in those locations. Excessive growth in rural cities and Rural Towns, however, may create pressure for extending urban services (for example, roads) across the Rural Area or Natural Resource Lands, may increase conversion pressure on nearby Natural Resource Lands and adversely affect rural character. Therefore, King County views rural cities as qualitatively different from the Urban Growth Area as a whole, even though they may provide significant opportunities for residential or employment growth.

King County has worked with the rural cities to establish Urban Growth Areas to accommodate growth. These areas are shown as part of the Urban Growth Area on the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map.

KCCP Policy R-401

The rural, incorporated cities and their Urban Growth Areas shall be considered part of the Urban Growth Area for purposes of planning land uses and facility needs. King County should work with rural cities to encourage the provision of affordable housing, to minimize the impacts of new development on the surrounding rural land and to plan for growth consistent with long-term protection of significant historic resources, the surrounding Rural Area and Natural Resource Lands.

KCCP Policy R-402

Within Rural City Urban Growth Areas, the following uses shall be permitted until the area annexes to the city:

- a. Residential development at a density of 1 home per 5 acres or less with mandatory clustering; and
- b. Nonresidential development such as commercial and industrial as determined through previous subarea plans.

Applicable Countywide Planning Policies

The King Countywide Planning Policies provide broad policy direction for the comprehensive plans of all jurisdictions within King County are:

FW-6 The land use pattern for the County shall protect the natural environment by reducing the consumption of land and concentrating development. Urban Growth Areas, Rural Areas, and resource lands shall be designated and the necessary implementing regulations adopted. This includes Countywide establishment of a policy planning boundary for the Urban Growth Area. Local jurisdictions shall establish these land use designations, based on the Countywide Planning Policies which are to be used as a framework for the adoption of the 1994 Metropolitan King County Comprehensive Plan.

FW-7 Urban Growth Areas, Rural Areas, and resource lands shall be designated and the necessary implementing regulations adopted. This includes Countywide establishment of an Urban Growth Area. Local jurisdictions shall establish these land use designations, based on the Countywide Planning Policies.

FW-8 All jurisdictions acknowledge that Rural Areas provide an overall benefit for all residents of King County. Strategies to fund infrastructure and services in Rural Areas may be needed to support a defined rural level-of-service. Towns and cities in the Rural Areas play an important role as trade and community centers.

FW-9 A fundamental component of the Countywide planning strategy is the maintenance of the traditional character of the Rural Area with its mix of forests, farms, high-quality natural environment, rural cities, unincorporated Rural Centers, and variety of low density residential uses. The basic elements of this rural character are:

- a. **NATURAL FEATURES.** Such as water bodies and significant wetlands, scenic resources and habitat areas should be afforded long-term protection, minimizing long-term environmental degradation, and enhancing environmental quality where previous degradation has occurred.
- b. **RESOURCE-BASED INDUSTRIES.** Commercial and non-commercial farming, forestry, primary forest products manufacturing, mining and fisheries activities shall be encouraged to continue and to expand as possible.
- c. **RURAL TOWNS.** Valued attributes of small towns such as: public safety; historical continuity; small, independent business; and local availability of goods and services shall be encouraged to continue.
- d. **RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES.** Rural residents outside cities should anticipate lower levels of public services and infrastructure than those available in Urban Areas, maximizing self-sufficiency and independence.
- e. **OPEN SPACE SYSTEM.** Significant components of King County's Open Space System are found in Rural Areas. Trail corridors, habitat networks, recreational areas and scenic resources should be linked wherever possible to complete the system. Active recreational facilities shall be rural in character. Where a traditional landscape of

fields cleared for agricultural purposes exists, new development should be clustered at the edges of fields to minimize the consumption of agricultural land and possible conflicts with current or future farming activity.

- f. **RURAL HOUSING.** The Rural Areas shall offer important alternative and qualitative housing choices but shall not be considered a quantitatively significant part of the County's residential growth capacity.
- g. **RURAL ECONOMY.** The Rural Areas make a unique contribution to King County's economy. In addition to farming, fisheries and forestry, cottage industries shall be recognized as making a significant economic contribution in Rural Areas, and should be encouraged.
- h. **CITIES.** Rural cities shall encourage, where appropriate, business opportunities which support the full range of rural activities occurring in their adjacent Rural Areas, including support services for agriculture and forestry. Cities should also provide a place for shopping, education, social services and other community functions at a scale consistent with the maintenance of rural character as well as the cities' household and employment target ranges.

FW-10 To achieve and maintain rural character, King County, and the cities, as appropriate, shall use a range of tools including, at a minimum: land use designations, development regulations, level-of-service standards (particularly for infrastructure), and incentives.

LU-6 Through the Countywide Planning Policy process, King County, with the cooperation of the cities, shall be responsible for designating Rural Areas consistent with Growth Management Act. In designating long-term Rural Areas, King County shall foster better use of limited public funds by allowing service providers to establish distinctly rural facility and service standards.

LU-7 Designated Rural Areas are considered to be permanent and shall not be redesignated to an Urban Growth Area until reviewed pursuant to the Growth Management Act (RCW 36.70A.130 (3)) and policy FW-1. Future growth should be accommodated to the maximum extent feasible by efficient use of existing urban land within the Urban Growth Area. Annexation of Rural Areas to cities shall be prohibited. When annexation of Rural Areas is necessary to link two Urban Areas, that intervening Rural Area shall be designated as permanent urban separator at low rural densities.

LU-9 Permitted land uses within designated Rural Area farming and forestry districts should be limited to residences at very low densities and farming or forestry-related uses. Institutional uses or public facilities should not be permitted except for the siting of utility lines where no feasible alternative exists and the siting of K-12 public schools and K-12 public school facilities in conjunction with K-12 Public Schools. Development of adjacent lands should be conditioned to minimize land use conflicts and conversion pressures upon these districts.

LU-10 The Rural Area shall have low densities which can be sustained by minimal infrastructure improvements, such as septic systems and rural roads. King County, cities adjacent to Rural Areas, and other agencies providing services to Rural Areas, shall adopt standards for

facilities and services in Rural Areas that protect basic public health and safety, and enhance the environment, but urban facilities and services should not be provided to Rural Areas. Utilities, roads, and other infrastructure improvements may only be extended through Rural Areas to serve existing Urban Areas.

LU-12 Planning for Rural Areas should comply with the following density guidelines:

- a. One home per 20 acres to protect forest lands when designated in accordance with policy LU-8.
- b. One home per ten acres to protect lands for small-scale farming when designated in accordance with policy LU-8;
- c. One home per ten acres is also appropriate if the predominant lot size is ten acres or larger and the lands are within one-quarter of a mile of a designated Forest Production District or lower-density Agricultural Production District with livestock-based agriculture or a legally-approved long-term mineral resource extraction site, or the lands contain significant environmentally constrained areas as defined by County ordinance or Federal or State law;
- d. One home per five acres where the land is physically suitable and can be supported by rural services; and
- e. Development on existing sub-standard lots in the Rural Area shall be permitted when applicable development standards, such as Board of Health regulations for on-site sewage disposal, can be met.

APPENDIX C: Public Involvement

This appendix contains information related to the Public Meetings held during the summary of 2005. Included in the appendix are:

- 1) Rural Economic Strategies Public Meetings Announcement
- 2) A Summary of the Input Received from the Public Meetings
- 3) Written Comments Received

Rural Economic Strategies Public Meetings Announcement

Help Shape the Future of Rural King County!

Spend an evening with your neighbors and help shape the future of rural King County. We are interested in your ideas about how to ensure the economic viability of the rural area while maintaining its character.

To help shape the King County Rural Economic Strategies,

we need your ideas on:

- **Agriculture and agriculture production districts**
- **Forestry and forestry production districts**
- **Rural cities, towns, and neighborhoods**
- **Home occupations and cottage industries**
- **Tourism including recreation and equestrian uses**

Please attend one of the following meetings:

July 12, 7:00 – 8:30 pm in South King County

The Fieldhouse at the King County Enumclaw Park

28511 Enumclaw-Chinook Pass Road (Hwy 410), Enumclaw, WA

July 21, 7:00 – 8:30 pm on Vashon Island

Multi-Purpose Room at Chautauqua Elementary School,

9309 Cemetery Road SW, Vashon, WA

July 26, 7:00 – 8:30 pm in North King County

Tolt Middle School, 3740 Tolt Avenue, Carnation, WA

Alternative formats and access available.

If you have any questions or need any additional information please feel free to contact the Rural Economic Strategies Coordinator, Julia Larson at 206-296-1062 or by email at julia.larson@metrokc.gov.



King County

**Sponsored by the King County Office of Business Relations
and Economic Development**

Summary of Public Meetings Summary

This document contains a listing of the ideas and thoughts received during the three public meetings held to obtain rural resident and stakeholder participation into the Rural Economic Strategies. The meetings were held in three areas of the rural community:

- Southern King County in Enumclaw on July 12
- Vashon Island on July 21
- Northern King County in Carnation on July 26

Attendees were asked to provide information on opportunities and unmet needs around five economic clusters and this document is divided into those clusters, which are:

- Agriculture
- Forestry
- Home Occupation / Cottage Industry
- Tourism / Recreation
- Rural Commercial Centers (which includes commercial & industrial uses)

Several ideas or thoughts that were raised during the public meetings do not fit into any one of the economic cluster and have been included in a table after the economic clusters. Readers will find a significant difference in style and content within the various tables, this is related to both the differences in thoughts of the meeting attendees and the fact that facilitators for each cluster changed with each meeting.

PLEASE REVIEW AND COMMENT

We are asking rural residents and stakeholders to please review and comment on these ideas and thoughts. Attendees of the public meetings will be forwarded a copy of this document to review and comment on and a copy of this report will also be posted on the King County Website. In order for comments to be included in the initial draft of the Rural Economic Strategies report, comments need to be received by the Office of Business Relations and Economic Development no later than August 31. If you are on-line you can click on <http://apps01.metrokc.gov/www/go/comment.cfm> to send comments or you can reference the contact information at the end of this document.

Public review and comment will again be solicited after the initial Rural Economic Strategies report is drafted, thus rural residents and stakeholders will have additional opportunities to input into this process.

As will be seen throughout this document, there is a concern on the part of rural residents and stakeholders that they are not being listened to. This is your opportunity to provide direction into the development of the rural economic strategies. Please forward ideas and recommendations on projects, programs, and partnerships that can help make the rural economic strategies effective. Thank you.

The Agriculture Cluster

Enumclaw Meeting

Opportunities / Unmet Needs

Cattle

Grazing of cattle is the main economically viable agriculture activity in the Enumclaw Agricultural Production District:

- Labor costs are too high to support crops.
- Sheep, unless they are Romney's or a few other breeds, will get foot disease.
- The lack of drainage on the Osceolla mudflow means that animals have to be off the land 6 months of the year. Generally a sacrifice area is needed or the pasture land will be trashed.

There is nothing new on the economics of raising cattle. Therefore:

- On the revenue side, direct marketing is the best way to earn a profit.
- The Sales Pavilion acts as a middleman for feeder sales and cull cows.
- Other livestock sales generally take place in Centralia; however the four hour trip cuts into profit margins.
- The majority of cattle raisers have other jobs, thus they need a coop and/or access to a mobile slaughter unit like the one in Duvall.
- Additionally, because of limited time spent on cattle, the majority can not pursue the value added benefits of purebreds: as the return comes from having the time to show the animals.

On the expense side, the government can't do anything about grain costs. The only thing government can do is lower taxes. Agriculture gets a partial break on property taxes, and then the special service assessments hit us:

- Storm water fee
- Conservation District assessment
- Drainage districts

These fees can add up to around \$4,000 on 30 acres, therefore the attendees recommend that KC assess by parcel and do a flat fee.

New Generation of Farmer	<p>There is a new generation of farmer in the Enumclaw and Snoqualmie regions, they raise both crops and animals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The majority of these farmers lease land as they can't afford to buy it. Governments tend to make the argument that by allowing agricultural zoning into smaller parcels, individuals should be able to afford to buy land for farming or cattle. - Free range poultry are a good specialty market; however, they lose value when they become a commodity. - They also have a need for a mobile slaughter unit. - Need research and marketing efforts to keep produce and poultry out of commodity market and in the specialty market, where a profit can be made. - Would like to see more local meat and processed food at markets: milk, butter, cheese, etc. - A \$300,000 grant from USDA could be used to put in processing facilities, however it would need effective leadership make it work. - Evaluate the needs of the growth in ethnic markets demands (note: religious kill techniques would make a difference in marketing and sales). - Investigate and apply steps similar to Canada for wineries where they put into place marketing and advertising campaigns and funding and made zoning changes.
Government Issues to Support Agriculture	<p>There are specific government issues to be addressed if we are to better support agriculture as an economic activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We need to know what the requirements are for wineries - the federal and county regulations do not agree. - Story told, of someone following regulations, being refused permits, therefore relocating store front to Pierce County side of property, and King County is now losing the sales taxes. - The taxes make hard cider too expensive to produce. - State, county and federal regulations need to be more uniform to enable the siting of a winery incubator. There is a group who would use one. - There are only two counties in the country that grade lamb. King Co is one of them. Why? - There needs to be better coordination between WSDA and USDA on inspection requirements for agricultural buildings. WSDA inspects the premises, USDA inspects the meat. We pay for both of them. One entity could do them together and charge by the hour. - What is considered "value added" vs. a farm activity?

Vashon Meeting – Agriculture

Opportunities / Unmet Needs	
Micro Farming	Encourage more micro farming; explore viable models, strategies, and ideas.
APD or TDR	Evaluate opportunities for an agriculture production district (APD) or use of transfer development rights (TDR) on Vashon
Tax Dollars Distribution	<p>Use a portion of Vashon tax dollars on Vashon and earmark a portion of those for agriculture ... use for following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - compost facility - seed exchange - internship program - Micro loan program for start up farmers.
Agricultural Options to Explore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dairy processing cooperative - Member owned food cooperative - Tool cooperative - Labor Cooperative - Dollars to hire an Agriculture Coordinator for Vashon farmers
Affordable Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An issue for farm labor because of high cost of housing and transportation (possible have free ferry and/or bus passes for farm labor) - Change land covenants that restrict affordable housing - Relax zoning and codes to allow various types of multi-family housing
Local Currency	Develop a local currency
Access to Insurance	Enhance access to insurance, especially for labor force
More Land Under Cultivation	Increase land areas under cultivation
Animal Control	Problems with deer, peacocks, and other animals
Property Taxes	Property taxes are too high and are forcing farmers to sell out
Needed Facilities	Vashon needs a commercial kitchen and a mobile slaughter unit

Carnation Meeting – Agriculture

Opportunities / Unmet Needs

Weddings in Ag	Allow weddings to be held in the agriculture zone
Permitting of Farm Processing Facilities	Ability to build a farm processing facility without a hard permit process
Schools on Farms	Allow for a school on a farm
Organic Farming	Support increase in organic farming, can use the "Quillisascut farm" as a model
Farm Worker Housing	Provide for worker housing on farms
Farmer Home on Farm	Allow farmer to live on the farm, even in the flood plain
Low Income Housing	Access to low income housing
Assistance with Business Plans	Assistance with business plans for farmers

The Forestry Cluster

Enumclaw Meeting

Opportunities / Unmet Needs

Forestry Vital to Enumclaw Region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Forestry has played a vital role in the economic health of the Enumclaw region. - There has been a dramatic change in forestry in recent years. - Enhancement of forestry in the region should be evaluated as part of this process. - There is a large work force of trained forest production individuals in the Enumclaw region.
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Vashon Meeting – Forestry

Opportunities / Unmet Needs

Add Capacity	Add capacity to milling, kilning, planning, & finishing for final use on Vashon without having to go off-island for resources (trees) or services (workers & infrastructure).
Marketing	Encourage local use of local wood
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Island lumber, community demand for local wood, grab builders - Institute for Environmental Research & Education (IERE) can help with planning, education and outreach.
Sustainable Vashon	Sustainable Vashon for economic development – get publicity in local paper.
Chamber	Get assistance from Chamber of Commerce to help with marketing local wood.
KC / Built Green	KC to continue pressure on Built Green to give multiple points for local grown, local milled, local built.
Local Involvement	Involve, encourage, and provide outreach to local forest landowners to utilize local forest expertise and services.
Grant Support	Need development support for grants ... find grants that will fund local workers in job development ... re-do brochure, develop logo, find graphics donations.
KC and/or State Funding & Support	Obtain County funding for affordable housing based on local grown, local milled, local built or state funding.

Small Footprint Housing	Consider alternative or small footprint housing.
Appropriate Harvests	Encourage patch cut, thinning, or whatever is appropriate for particular job
Approach to Economic Development	Urban mentality writing and planning for rural areas – misses the boat!
Business Plan Assistance	Business plan assistance for groups such as the Vashon Forest Stewards.
Forest Stewards	More people on board of Forest Stewards with financial backgrounds.
Tax Relief	Tax relief for building sustainable structures, maintaining a green home, or retrofitting to green.

Carnation Meeting – Forestry

(Note: this group addressed numerous issues that will all be listed here, as little of the group discussion focused on forestry)

Opportunities / Unmet Needs	
Permits - Forestry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Should be easier and less expensive to get a permit for harvesting through the county. - Hazard tree issue should be able to be resolved without getting a permit, through the county forester – do same way as state process - Forest thinning should be short prescriptive permit, should not trigger moratorium. - Forest practice permits should be processed within two weeks unless substantive sensitive areas require additional information
Permits - Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Look at things permits are required for such as water heaters, toilets, small buildings, and outbuildings; eliminate unnecessary requirements. - Permit structure too costly and slow for jobs being accomplished. - What is the purpose of the permit?
Lack of Trust	Lack of trust in engaging in dialog with KC due to previous input on CAO being ignored.
What Will be Done with Input Here	What really will be done with the input from these meetings?
Too Many County Staff at Meeting	Too many county staff here, too many dollars in planning ... this budget could be put to better use in rural law enforcement.
Impacts of CAO Urban	The very impacts that the CAO was trying to regulate were, for the most part occurring in the urban areas and thus should be regulated in the urban areas.
Sheriff's Budget	Budget and funding for sheriff to eliminate criminal rural "economic" activities which are degrading the area and polluting.
Science	Require science be obtained from objective scientist under contract rather than county employees
Accountability	Clearly stated purpose, accountability, and open and honest communication is needed.

Economic Strategy	When considering economic strategy, you should be contrasting way rural area was 50 – 75 years ago with infrastructure support for rural industry (farming, logging, gravel) making up the rural town. Today rural area is a bedroom community.
Property Maintenance	Main industries today should be property maintenance – building, remodeling, landscaping, thinning, septic and well maintenance, house cleaning, vet, etc.
Affordable Housing	Support workers require affordable housing (includes some of those occupations listed above in property maintenance).
Presentation	Felt lectured to in the opening – resented that. Presentation caused some individuals to tune out.
Facilitators	Facilitator in previous group did not understand the issues causing rural citizens concern, had to educate county employee before our issues were recorded, frustrating to input.
KC has Plan then Comes to Citizens	Sense that KC has a plan and then comes to the people. Need to engage people in the process, address their issues, and <u>then follow through</u> .
Citizens Carrying Baggage	Meetings have not been able to be brought to closure. People are now carrying baggage.
Lost Input	KC has missed/not heard/lost very valid important input through this poor communication model.
Disagreement with KC Equals Being Negative	Citizens feel that any time they disagree with the county they are labeled as “being negative.”
Communication	Even government to government communication is not working.
Relationships	<p>“A little at time ... then all at once”</p> <p>It is all about relationships. Those relationships need to be re-established, rebuilt, and then nurtured though open and honest communication.</p>
Interact with Landowners	KC should fund staff to interact with land owners.

The Home Occupation / Home Industry Cluster

Enumclaw Meeting

Opportunities / Unmet Needs

Types of Businesses to Consider	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Day Care Centers- Consulting Businesses- Working from home for larger business, corporation, medical center, etc.- On-line (such as E-Bay)- Arts & Crafts
Ability to Make a Profit	Being able to make a profit from their business in the rural area if often difficult, however the reasons vary.
Obtaining Necessary Supplies	Often difficult to obtain and/or store necessary supplies and materials for business.
Foreign Competition	Many home occupations cannot succeed due to imported products being cheaper than they can provide and other foreign competition issues.
Web Connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Problem with connectivity to either broadband or wireless for computer access and additional issue of security of information, especially in sales.- KC should coordinate and help apply pressure so everyone in KC has access.
Marketing Assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Need assistance both with marketing plans and marketing of products or services to a larger audience.- Would also like assistance in coordinating and providing information about festivals, events, etc throughout the county.
Information	Develop a place on KC Website where individuals can: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Find out about business opportunities that will work in the rural area,- Share information with others doing the same type of business,- Advertise events or sales of the services or products, and- Highlight successful rural businesses.
Assistance in developing Cooperatives	Need help in bringing interested individuals together to develop cooperatives for services or products. How to set up, how to manage, developing business plans, developing marketing strategies, etc.
Code Revisions	Change codes related to home occupations, more flexibility in the rural areas of the county, especially for unique businesses, such as allowing a large swimming pool for swimming lessons.

Vashon Meeting – Home Occupations/Home industries

Opportunities / Unmet Needs	
Connectivity	Need for connectivity to cable, wireless and support for technical assistance for computer work from home.
Technical Assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need for technical assistance - Marketing Plans - Networking with others or within specific businesses - Where possible use local (on island) talent
Cooperative Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evaluate and explore opportunities for cooperative marketing opportunities to add value to home occupations. - Market local businesses to other local businesses and residents.
Training	Skill sets are needed; work with schools and others on occupational training.
Asset Mapping	Community asset mapping should be conducted
Brand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vashon Island "Brand" should be developed - Then keep it "Vashonable"
Cooperative Attitude	A cooperative attitude should be developed on Island for all businesses.
Isolationism	Break down Isolation
Bed & Breakfast Inns	Need additional Bed and Breakfast Inns
Eco-Tourism	Encourage small businesses that support ecological projects and sustainable Vashon.
Water issues	Training or materials about effective use of water / water conservation.
Directory	Develop a directory of who is here and what they do.
Renter needs	Renter needs should be explored and addressed on Island.
Quality of Life	Do want to lose the existing quality of life on Island.

Carnation Meeting – Home Occupations/Home Industries

Opportunities / Unmet Needs

Business Options in the Rural Area, may require some code changes to offer these types of needed services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Roofing and gutter repair - Welding - Small engine repair - Large motors repair (diesels, gas, electric) - Irrigation system - Locksmiths - Carpentry - Tree service - Fireplace wood supplies - Blacksmith - Window / Glass installation & repair - Auto glass - Excavation - Electricians - Electronic services such as computer repair - Janitorial services / House cleaning - Septic Systems installation & repair - Mobile Vets
Large Business is Given Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Feel that big businesses are able to get permits easily, yet have greater environmental impacts than small businesses. - Feel that small businesses pay proportionally more for their permits in time, money, and stress. - Feel that small businesses are "run out of the county" by large commercial developers or businesses. - Significant increasing property values and tax increases in the rural area hurt small business or drive them out. - Fewer customers for small business. - Feel small local businesses are being bought out by big companies.
Cable Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Feel that cable internet fees are double for small business vs. residential use. - Need a cooperative to give businesses access to services.
Concern About Significant Road Improvements	Local rural communities have to pay in time, money, and quality of life to protect rural area from infrastructure changes demanded by big business, such as 2 lane road becomes a 4 lane road with traffic light.
Urban/Suburban Dwellers Have Stake in Rural Areas	Urban/Suburban dwellers have a stake in preserving the rural areas. These folks need to understand that without their interest and support, the rural areas will disappear. By helping to sustain the rural area, they are ensuring the amenities found in the rural area for everyone.

Change in Home Occupation Regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hosting weddings on property - Limit on number of employees either on site or that can work for you off site. - No equipment over 1.5 tons by KC Code and cannot park one backhoe and 1 truck on property. - Number of on site customers, should be able to vary on case by case basis. - Regulations developed for urban/suburban areas, need additional flexibility in rural area.
Conditional Use Permit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Feel requirements for conditional use permits are cost prohibitive and not all really apply to rural area, such as putting in a driveway to city standards that will only handle 10 cars a day. - Sole proprietor may need conditional use permit just to store equipment or to telecommute. - Review regulations for applicability to "rural area needs."
Lack of Follow-Through after Holding Community Meetings	Feel that KC does not follow-through on meetings of this sort where input is sought from local citizens and stakeholders.
Creative Experts and Dollars	Need dollars to hire creative minds to help rural businesses.

The Tourism / Recreation Cluster

Enumclaw Meeting

Opportunities / Unmet Needs	
Tourism	Rural areas can capitalize on boom in eco-tourism ... rural areas are the gateways to King County's ecological assets.
Attractions, Services	Rural communities have the ability to offer attractions and services ... get people to stop in town on the way
Travel Dollars	In addition to the activities themselves, many eco-tourists also spend a lot on travel, in general.
Related businesses	Equestrian, mountain biking, etc. require equestrian services, horse trailers, equipment shops, repair shops, etc., building markets for new businesses specific serving various activities.
Inter-jurisdictional Initiatives	The region could do more inter-jurisdictional planning, something like a "Getting Connected" Initiative... making all the connections on the rural trail networks that connect to the regional trails.

Awareness of Assets	Existing destinations, tourism opportunities around county are not well known or advertised, sometimes even local rural residents or rural political leaders are unaware of assets. User groups seem to have the most knowledge of worthwhile destinations.
Marketing Resources	Even when destinations are known, marketing budgets are minimal or non-existent in order to capitalize on those assets.
Trail heads / Parking	Many spectacular destinations do not have trail heads or parking, a relatively low expense item for potential high return as an eco-tourism resource (easier to locate, market, etc). Lack of parking and centralized hubs spreads users out along country roads or on sensitive lands which creates safety issues and also represents a lost opportunity for revenue (services at hubs).
KC Volunteer Policies / Resources	King County volunteer program is understaffed and is not fully leveraging resources of rural community. Volunteer policies, risk policies, and labor restrictions severely limit possible contributions by rural residents whom have much more to offer than typical urban volunteers (i.e. heavy equipment, raw materials, etc.)
Balance	There is not enough balance in spending among regional urban projects and rural projects ... in addition too much is being spent on large natural acquisitions while existing rural assets remain undeveloped or under utilized.
Planning	With the exception of trails, there is no short-term or long term planning by KC in relation to eco-tourism and recreation opportunities among its rural assets.
Trail Connections	There are too many small connections that have not been made.
Risk Management	Risk management is a barrier to many opportunities ... there is too much fear related to public access and use of assets.
Continuum of O&M and Design Standards	There should be a sliding scale along the level of design standards and O&M standards among urban and rural assets ... rural areas do not want or need highly manicured, perfect parks or trails and the high O&M that comes with that.
Paving	Trails should not be paved in the rural areas ... paved trails are an urban preference, rural areas do not want paved trails and they only add to the costs.
Terrain	The rural areas sit in the heart of or at the edge of, the best terrain and topography in King County for eco-tourism, adventure recreation, etc.
Organized Groups	King County's user groups are extremely versatile, skilled, and resourceful ... (i.e. BBTC, Backcountry Horsemen, etc.) and KC should make use of these resources.

Natural Areas	Rural communities are the gateways to King County's natural areas.
Trails	While disconnected in some areas, there is an amazing collection of trails that can connect adventurers between rural communities and their eco-tourism and adventure destinations.
Existing Inventory	There is an amazing existing inventory of destinations, both developed and undeveloped, known and unknown on which to build an economic development plan based on eco-tourism and adventure recreation.
KC Volunteer Staff	King County needs more staff for its volunteer program ... both for on the ground coordination, but also to focus on policy development that addresses current limitations.
Grants to Rural Areas	The number and amounts of flexible grants available to rural areas needs to be dramatically improved at the State and County level.
Marketing	Rural communities need help from user groups to identify existing eco-tourism assets as well as, the development needs of those assets ... KC needs to help rural communities to enhance and market those existing assets.
King County Leadership	KC needs to exercise a leadership role in coordinating rural communities, user groups, investors, etc. in developing a cohesive economic development strategies centered around existing assets and the minor or major investments needed at those assets to make them an eco-tourism resource.
Keep Existing Grants Programs	Keep recreation and other community grants coming ... these are a lifeline for rural communities. Rural communities would like to see these grants be larger for more significant economic development projects related to recreation.
Access to Research, Data	KC should share all of its data on demographics, GIS, consumer research, etc. with rural organizations and communities.
Stop Paving Trails	Stop paving trails in rural areas.

Vashon Meeting – Tourism/Recreation/Equestrian

Opportunities / Unmet Needs

Limiting Factor	Transportation costs to the island, high cost of ferries
Areas of Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Arts & markets for local artists - Sculpture parks - Bicycle systems should be separate whenever possible from vehicle lanes - Bicycle tours of the Island - Kayaking - Services including restaurants and Bed & Breakfast Inns
Reasons People Recreate on Vashon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shoreline & water access - Remote - Quiet
Signage	Need directional and consistent signage of park and recreation facilities on Island
Water Trail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vashon is part of the Water Trail and this recreational asset should be emphasized and built upon. - Maury Island Marine Park is currently underdeveloped; also have Winghaven and Spring Beach.
Eco-Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support tourism efforts that support the environment and sustainable education. - Promote items such as a "permaculture" or sustainability demonstration.
Recreation Threshold	Evaluate recreation in terms of quantity versus quality ... determine thresholds.
Equestrian	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Currently about 3,000 to 4,000 horses on Vashon - Look at network of horse trails - Island Center Forest
Festival Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coordination of festivals and recreational events on Island - Maximize potential tourism opportunities - Possibly charge slightly higher fee for festivals and pay volunteers - Strawberry Festival should focus on local vendors and limit outsiders
Hiking Trail Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Connect the network of hiking trails on Island, almost complete, some cross private land areas and are known to locals. - Set up similar to hiking trails in England.

Encourage "Passive" Recreation	Recommend that the Island focus on encouraging passive recreation activities rather than aggressive tourist activities.
Library as Resource	Library is great resource of tourism activities on Island, this resource could be enhanced for eco-tourism.
Quality of Life	Concern about maintaining the existing quality of life on Vashon.
Sustain Existing Businesses	Need to sustain existing businesses
PUD	Develop a PUD for sewer system on island.
Diversity of Workforce	Concerns about providing housing, transportation, etc., to maintain a diverse workforce on the Island.
Affordable Housing	Need for affordable housing for workers.
Displacement of Population	Concern about displacement of existing populations due to increase in land values and taxes. Should monitor and check, especially people on fixed incomes.
Data Base	Recommend that we create a system of metrics so that we have a base line data base upon which to measure the impacts of changes ... the data base should include items such as work force, vehicles, decibel levels, population concentrations, traffic counts, foot traffic, number of people at facilities, etc.
Sustainability	Vashon has an interest in becoming totally sustainable ... work, live, and recreate on the Island.

Carnation Meeting – Tourism/Recreation/Equestrian

Opportunities / Unmet Needs

Continuity of Trail System	Continuity of trail system – linkage from each type of trail (hiking, equestrian, cycling). An issue in this area is concerns about trail and recreation access where potential uses cross from public to private and back into public access again.
Private/Public Trail and Recreation Access	Need for better linkage and interface between public and private lands for trail corridors.
Equestrian	Equestrian – the equestrian community would like to see a series of trails for equestrian use in the region. Additionally there is the issue with access points to the trails having sufficient parking for trucks and horse vans at the access points.
Provide more Multi-Use Trails	Build more multi-use trails, encourage tourism related to outdoor recreation activities, develop recreational easements to insure trail development on private lands – (similar to development rights but an easement in support of recreational activities on public, private and non-profit owned lands)
Launch Point Services	Numerous individuals stated that trail and recreation access launch points need several items including sufficient parking, restroom facilities, and when appropriate other amenities such as picnic facilities, trash facilities, possible equipment rentals (bikes, canoes, kayaks, etc), sundries and supplies.
Access Issues & Development Rights	Access issues and development rights, how to insure continued or new public/trail access when lands are saved for “environmental” or working forest reasons.
Balancing Recreation with Environmental Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strong concern over balancing recreation opportunities with environmental priorities – loss of recreation access due to “salmon habitat projects” – access to rivers and increased recreational opportunities at a time when the county and state are focused on wildlife rather than people. - Habitat vs. recreation – concern expressed that we are out of balance toward protection
Community Partnerships	Numerous individuals would like to see the continuation of the various recreation and other community grants and partnership opportunities. Explore opportunities to expand the grants and increase the funding to allow for more significant economic development projects related to recreation.
River Recreation Access	Provide more and better recreational access areas to the rivers in the region.

Paradise Valley	Open up Paradise Valley ASAP for biking.
Tiger Mountain	Open more of Tiger Mountain to a variety of trail users ASAP.

The Rural Commercial Centers Economic Cluster

Enumclaw Meeting

Opportunities / Unmet Needs	
Access to Funding	Rural areas need more access to regional funding for rural economic development
Grant Limitations	Grants need to have less restrictions, more control at local / rural level.
Tax Revenue	In many rural areas, tax revenues are not keeping up with current costs... thus local investment in economic development on top of current cost is difficult, thereby continuing the revenue shortage cycle.
Rapid Development	In some areas of rural King County, rapid residential development outpacing key economic development opportunities by taking prime property.
Lack of Data, Research	Many rural areas do not have adequate access to data (demographics, marketing research, consumer profiles, etc.) to develop meaningful economic development plans.
Jurisdictions	Jurisdictional lines, tax bases, etc. are not conducive to inter-jurisdictional cooperation... It is difficult for Enumclaw to invest outside its borders into King County, and difficult for King County to invest within Enumclaw making joint projects difficult.
Balance	There is not enough balance in spending among regional urban projects and rural projects... in addition too much is being spent on large natural acquisitions while existing rural assets remain undeveloped.
KC Direction / Leadership	There is not enough KC leadership, coordination, or proactive positive contributions in rural areas... only mandates, restrictions, levies, etc.
Attractions, Services	Rural communities have the ability to offer attractions and services ... get people to stop in town on the way.
Related Businesses	Equestrian, mountain biking, etc. require equestrian services, horse trailers, equipment shops, repair shops, etc. building markets for new businesses specific serving various activities.

Natural Areas	Rural communities are the gateways to King County's natural areas.
King County Leadership	King County needs to exercise a leadership role in coordinating rural communities, user groups, investors, etc. in developing a cohesive economic development strategies centered around existing assets and the minor or major investments needed at those assets to make them an eco-tourism resource.
Keep existing Grants Programs	Keep ADOP, YSFG, and other community grants coming ... these are a lifeline for rural communities. Rural communities would like to see these grants be larger for more significant economic development projects related to recreation
Access to Research, Data	King County should share all of its data on demographics, GIS, consumer research, etc. with rural communities

Vashon Meeting – Rural Commercial Centers

Opportunities / Unmet Needs	
Word Usage	Use terminology Commercial & Neighborhood Centers
Partnering	Partner with schools for job fairs
Business Contributions to Communities	Businesses should help underwrite costs of community needs, such as tax from wine purchases could go to affordable housing.
Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Campaign to shop on Vashon - Sustained marketing campaign – Brand Vashon
Business Expansion	Which businesses and how
Downtown	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evaluate 80-20 formula for businesses, there is turnover - Continuity of downtown area
Industrial Lands	<p>Recruit light manufacturing to the island (low/medium wage jobs)</p> <p>Synergy between existing industries for business opportunities and environmental strategies ... consider</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recycling - Value-added forest products - New environmental friendly policies - Alternative energy possibilities
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consider both public and private transportation facilitation - Ferry System – Connection buses with ferries schedule ... 40% of riders are commuters
Small Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Resource centers, sources for capital for small business

Incubators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maximizing existing resources, such as libraries and colleges - Good vocational education - Innovative strategies for local job creation - Ability of small business to get small business loans - KC assistance for small business – maybe an advisory group for input - Example: Island spring Tofu
Attract New Businesses to Island	Attract independent small businesses to island that will maintain character of island.
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need infrastructure to support any type of island development – have projections for growth and needs to address that growth. - Easy information access for current public funds used on Vashon each year, input for dollars spent. - Infrastructure development – septic, PUD's. - Incorporate UW septic system that is affordable into KC code (\$12,000 per system). - Issues with second home owners (absentee home-owners).
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote / Encourage mother-in-law type apartment and cottages. - How can property taxes and land valuation support affordable housing?
KC Departments Need to Communicate	Different KC Departments need to communicate and coordinate more, permits, codes, etc.
Proactive Leadership from KC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need proactive leadership from KC on perception of government. - Mitigate adversarial perceptions in rural areas towards KC.

Carnation Meeting – Rural Commercial Centers

Opportunities / Unmet Needs	
City Business Revenue Sources	Protect city business revenue sources. (Will rural areas be rezoned so new businesses in unincorporated areas draw business away from established cities?)
Farming now Niche or Boutique Market	The County appears to think of preserving agriculture as it was in the 1950's and it is now more like the Remlinger Farms model—appealing to a niche or boutique market.
Small Business Models	Duvall's small businesses are a model for what makes sense—a small Washington wine tasting boutique and a quilt shop.

Support Small Business	Support small business owners.
Impact of CAO	The Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO) is causing rural cities and towns to absorb a lot of growth) Urbanization of rural cities is being hastened and putting a great deal of stress on existing cities.
Event Promotion	It's too difficult to promote events. (WSDOT should permit banners to be hung across the state highway).
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is a lack of public transportation options. - There should be transit circulation through the Valley (like the Issaquah circulator buses).
Communication Valley-wide	Support communication through the Valley. There should be a Valley promotion website.
Service	Provide services of real value to customers.
Affordable Housing	Need for affordable housing.
Rural Cites and Towns do not have enough Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Feel that rural cities and towns do not have the resources to do thorough planning, such as the pressures on Carnation to provide sewers ... this need will take priority away from future of strawberry fields. - Need sewers to improve the downtown businesses, but will then bring in big business. - Problem boils down to not having enough money to pay for economic growth and protecting the rural economy, example is depressed downtown Carnation. - Small down economies are fragile and vulnerable to any change, such as one major business going under because their building burned - Dollars are needed to help small community's problem solve key planning issues in order to preserve their rural identity. <p>Communities are often forced to decide between economic survival and rural character.</p>
Creative Thinking	Need dollars to hire creative minds to help rural businesses

Ideas / Thoughts that Fall Outside the Clusters

Several items for discussion were raised by individuals that do not necessarily fit within the economic clusters are presented below.

Opportunities / Unmet Needs	
Affordable Housing	Affordable housing is a significant concern for rural residents, both for those individuals and families living on a fixed income and for those individuals who work at low to moderate income jobs. Numerous individuals who live in the rural area work two or three jobs.
Affordable Housing Options (Vashon)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facilitate affordable housing (zoning, land, water, property tax evaluations) - Study public attitude regarding affordable housing - Share information about affordable housing
Transportation in Rural Areas	Consider both public and private transportation facilitation
Urban Growth Boundaries	Concern was expressed that this process was designed to allow significant development to occur outside of the existing urban growth boundaries. (Note: that is not the intent of this process and it is anticipated that no changes to the urban growth boundary will occur as the result of this process, except possibly around the Town of Skykomish, and only if the town requests such a change.)
Visions	Help create a "Vision" for each of the distinct communities within rural KC to try and help these areas maintain their unique characteristics.
Access to Funding	Rural areas need more access to regional funding for rural economic development
Grant Limitations	Grants need to have less restrictions, more control at local / rural level
Tax Revenue	In many rural areas, tax revenues are not keeping up with current costs... thus local investment in economic development on top of current cost is difficult, thereby continuing the revenue shortage cycle
Rapid Development	In some areas of rural King County, rapid residential development outpacing key economic development opportunities by taking prime property
Lack of Data, Research	Many rural areas do not have adequate access to data (demographics, marketing research, consumer profiles, etc.) to develop meaningful economic development plans

Jurisdictions	Jurisdictional lines, tax bases, etc. are not conducive to inter-jurisdictional cooperation... It is difficult for Enumclaw to invest outside its borders into King County, and difficult for King County to invest within Enumclaw making joint projects difficult.
Balance	There is not enough balance in spending among regional urban projects and rural projects ... in addition too much is being spent on large natural acquisitions while existing rural assets remain undeveloped.
KC Direction / Leadership	There is not enough KC leadership, coordination, or proactive positive contributions in rural areas... only mandates, restrictions, levies, etc.
Continuum of O&M and Design Standards	There should be a sliding scale along the level of design standards and O&M standards among urban and rural assets ... rural areas do not want or need highly manicured, perfect parks or trails and the high O&M that comes with that...
Grants to Rural Areas	The number and amounts of flexible grants available to rural areas needs to be dramatically improved at the State and Count level
Marketing	Rural communities need help from user groups to identify existing eco-tourism assets as well as, the development needs of those assets.... King County needs to help rural communities to enhance and market those existing assets.
King County Leadership	King County needs to exercise a leadership role in coordinating rural communities, user groups, investors, etc. in developing a cohesive economic development strategies centered around existing assets and the minor or major investments needed at those assets to make them an eco-tourism resource.
Keep existing Grants Programs	Keep ADOP, YSFG, and other community grants coming ... These are a lifeline for rural communities. Rural communities would like to see these grants be larger for more significant economic development projects related to recreation
Access to Research, Data	King County should share all of its data on demographics, GIS, consumer research, etc. with rural communities
Invasive Species	Continue to make it possible/easy/doable to eliminate invasive species. Need more grants to accomplish. Also more education/outreach.

Email from Justin Vander Pol, Backcountry Bicycle Trails Club

Date Received: 7/20/2005

Hi Julia,

I attended the meeting you held recently in Enumclaw, and members of our group will also be at the Tolt meeting. You encouraged us to provide written feedback to complement the comments we made in the breakout groups. Could you let me know the proper way to provide written comments?

Thanks for your work on this project, I really think it has the potential to have a long-term positive impact!

Cheers,

Justin Vander Pol
Executive Director
Backcountry Bicycle Trails Club
<http://bbtc.org>
206-524-2900

Do you want more mountain bike trails? Join today at
http://www.bbtc.org/php/show_page.php?page_id=45

Email from Lee Grumman

Date Received: 7/27/2005

Hi Julia,

Thanks for coming out to Carnation last night. It is reassuring to know that the County is investing their time in helping us to develop our rural-based economies out here...a challenge indeed!

I had an idea that I wanted to pass along. You may recall that I asked about the Barn Again program last night. Ray was kind enough to put me in touch with Julie Kohler with whom I spoke briefly about the project and sure enough Julie confirmed my impression that the Barn Again project seeks to find alternative economic uses for the barns.

In light of this intent I thought it would be great to integrate the Barn Again program in the work on rural economic strategies. For example, I'd love to see a brief description of the Barn Again project when you send along with the comments you've just collected from Enumclaw, Vashon and Carnation. It would be helpful to have a representative from the project at future community meetings or at least an update included on the meeting agendas.

Also, could you send me a list of the names, titles and contact information for the King County folks that were at the meeting last night? I'd like to know who all is involved.

Thank you!!!!

Lee Grumman
425.333.4974
www.millersarts.com

***Email from Rita Schenck, Institute for Environmental
Research and Education***

Received 8/12/2005

Julia,

I thought that you did an admirable job gathering together the notes for the island.

A couple of thoughts:

Vashon has lots of camps—Camp Burton, Camp Sealh, summer arts camps, etc. They can for the most part be thought of as a nascent ecotourism business sector. We could build on that.

Lots of the things that were brought up we are already working on e.g. forestry/light industry, sustainable ag. When the opportunities show up that would allow us (IERE) to partner with you to get some of these things to happen, please do think of us.

Getting closer....

Rita
Institute for Environmental Research and Education
PO Box 2449, Vashon, WA 98070 USA
Phone: 206-463-7430 Fax: 206-279-1570

Email from Len Guss:

Julie, I have reviewed the material you sent and have the following comments:

1. Making and using local wood for construction - Local, distant or foreign, all lumber manufactured has to be graded according to accepted standards to pass codes. Grading requires an experienced grader, usually found in larger sawmills, or a machine which tests each piece of lumber -- somewhat expensive. Otherwise the lumber could only be used for nonstructural purposes: fencing, decking (after treating) etc.

2. I'm reasonably sure that King County could use a business consisting of a portable, truck-mounted sawmill (of which there are several) which would travel within the county to saw small volumes of timber. KC could also use a central dry kiln to which said lumber could be taken and custom dried and graded.

3. Obviously KC present CAO and permitting go a long way towards killing any reasonable forest endeavors on the part of small timberholders. Thinning, for example, is a constant need and should require little or no permitting. It's as essential for trees as for carrots.

4. Equestrians support many businesses but this is in serious decline here as horse trails are absorbed by residential construction. The number of horses and riders has declined and certainly as I am aware most small retailers serving the horse industry have gone kaput. Building another equestrian park is not a solution, although it is always welcome. We need more trails; every rural development should be obligated to incorporate equestrian trails as other communities have done. When people have a place to ride they buy and use more horses and horse related businesses.

If KC decides to support rural forestry, equestrian use, agriculture or whatever, the county should assign only staff with relevant knowledge and experience, rather than Seattle apartment dwellers who have never seen a sawmill, worked on a farm, ridden a horse or whatever. That would go a long way towards building trust and devising sensible support. For example, some years ago I met with a KC planner on behalf of equestrians. His idea was to protect grazing lands by requiring horses to eat only to 3" of grass. However, when I inquired as to how we were to police this and educate the horses, no answer was forthcoming.

Good luck and best regards,

Len

Email from Martin Koenig

From: Martin Koenig

Sent: Thursday, August 25, 2005 2:58 PM

To: Moore, Ghislaine

Cc: Nelson, Sharon; Constantine, Dow

Subject: Re: From King County, Julia Larson Rural Strategies Coordinator

Dear Julia,

I appreciated receiving the minutes from the July 21, 2005 meeting, but am concerned that they do not accurately represent all of the perspectives that were represented. I, and at least one other person, spoke to an alternative approach for economic development on our island. Our comments were not reflected in the minutes, nor was there any reference to the CD I provided you, and the information it contains.

This omission in the minutes results in a misrepresentation of what occurred at the meeting. Importantly, it also narrows the focus of discussion at a time when we should be discussing a range of options, a range of possible futures for our island.

Many islanders are concerned about what type of economic development may occur in our community. This is apparant from the CD I provided you. Meetings on economic development naturally draw strong representation from the business community, but it is important to recognize that there is a large group of community members who may not share their perspective. It is also important to represent this perspective accurately in minutes, even if it is expressed by a minority of those attending a meeting.

This "island scale" perspective is very realistic. It is based on the recognition of our limited island infrastructure, our dependence on increasing ferry costs, and the competition for our tax dollars for stable funding for our schools, fire protection, and our health clinic. This perspective, at the least, should be offered as one alternative to the scenario outlined in your minutes.

When developing future scenarios, rarely is a single one chosen. By analyzing alternative options, assumptions can be fully discussed, sensitivity analyses can reveal issues that had not been identified, and a community can talk about the values they hold. An analysis of a single future does not give our community this opportunity for discussion. And it does not provide us with information about how we can maximize our flexibility in response to changing conditions (e.g. ferry costs) or changing demographics.

I respectfully request that you describe this "island scale" perspective in the minutes, as it was represented at the meeting, and distribute this addition to the minutes to your distribution list.

Thank you very much, and I look forward to participating in upcoming meetings.

Sincerely,

Martin Koenig.

Email from: Richard Bonewits, Greater Maple Valley Area Council

August 29, 2005

To: Julia Larson, Coordinator – Rural Economic Development Strategy
Office of Business Relations and Economic Development
701 Fifth Avenue, Suite 2000
Seattle, WA 98104-7097

Cc: Ron Sims, King County Executive
Ray Moser, King County Manager-Business Relations
Larry Phillips, Chairman-King County Council
Dow Constantine, Member King County Council and Chairman-Growth Management/Unincorporated Areas Committee
David Irons, Member King County Council and Member-Growth Management/Unincorporated Areas Committee
Steve Hammond, Member King County Council and Member-Growth Management/Unincorporated Areas Committee

Subject: Comments on Rural Economic Development Plan (King County)

As the County has become more urbanized, we have become increasingly concerned about the reliability of the policy development process used by King County regarding the rural area. We have noted that the rural area policy making process relies less and less on the opinions of rural area citizens and landowners and that it gives more and more credence to the opinions of others.

We are also concerned about the validity of the information that may be reported from this “exercise:”

- 1) The total attendance at the three (3) public meetings was too low to provide any statistical validity to this “exercise”: **120 people (total) attended the three (3) meetings held (Enumclaw, Vashon and Carnation) with 24 of them being County employees and a significant number of the remainder living and representing either recreational, equestrian, tourism, or Rural Town, or Rural City interests.**
Excluding the County employees, 96 people attended these meetings. There are more than 130,000 citizens in King County’s rural areas (all areas outside the Urban Growth Line). This amounts to a 7/100 of 1% response – hardly enough to support a County public policy.
- 2) **No measures were used to provide traceability of inputs to their source.**

Since the primary purpose of this exercise was to determine what, if anything, should be done by the County to facilitate business development in the rural area, all suggestions from outside the rural area should be contrasted with, or

subordinated, in your final report on this “exercise” to the inputs that you received on forestry, agriculture and home occupations (which may be applicable to the needs of rural area citizens and landowners).

Although comments, outside the structured “round table” type discussions used by the County, were not encouraged by the County, many valuable comments were offered by the citizens (especially from Vashon), which may say more about their points of view on this subject than were offered in the structured groups set up by King County to discuss business development related to the topics of agriculture, forestry, home occupations, rural cities and towns, recreation, and tourism.

I made careful notes of these comments and I believe that they should be included in your final report to the Executive and King County Council. Here they are:

“You couldn’t have picked a worse night. We have two many other community events going on tonight that are popular within the community, such as music in the park.”

“What’s the purpose of this project, we like Vashon as it is.”

“How did this study come about? Did the landowners cry for help?”

“It seems that this study doesn’t include any measurement of the negative impacts, or costs, of the additional activities that might be required, or impacted, e.g. traffic, roads, or to the rural way of life.”

“You need a vision statement – it makes no sense to do a survey on rural economic needs before you have vision of the kind community the citizens want for themselves.” [My emphasis]

“Why weren’t the people notified better and why did you go to the chambers of commerce first? Whose interests do they represent – certainly not the landowners.”

“This looks like an opportunity for King County to slide into development of the rural areas through the back door by pretending to care about the small landowners by supporting development in the Rural Cities, towns and neighborhood businesses until they appeal to the County for more area to annex from the rural area.”

My personal comments:

King County Staff members continue to repeat, what seems to be an uneducated and counterintuitive mantra that says that it wants to help sustain and enhance the ability of rural landowners to engage in forestry and agriculture and to maintain a rural lifestyle, while simultaneously supporting build-up of Rural Cities and towns. This mantra appears ludicrous to many rural area people, who have spent years adjusting to changing County rural area policies and who have developed their necessary supply sources and markets developed and who know what their costs and profit potential are. Forestry and farming require large amounts of capital and labor. They have high start-up, operating and regulatory costs and

their operations often involve significant borrowing costs and taxes. Further, except for a handful of special cases, it is not probable that many Home Occupations and Cottage Industries will generate sufficient dollar income to make more than a small difference in the income of rural people. It is even less likely that the added tax revenues generated will offset the additional County infrastructure costs. Further, all rural people know that their real estate is more highly valued for residential and commercial development than it is for forestry, agriculture, or Rural Area residences. **The recurring questions are: “Whose idea was this study?” “What are its purposes?” “Who is expected to benefit from any changes?” “What are you doing to keep special interests from driving rural area policy?”**

As final note, as you know, I am Chairman of the Greater Maple Valley Area Council, which meets monthly. Since the summary of the information, which you gathered during this “exercise,” was not available for our Area Council to review at our August meeting, we may have further comments after our September meeting.

Thank you,

Original signed by

Richard E. Bonewits, 20114 SE 206th St. Maple Valley, WA 98038

Letterl from Paul Carkeek; July 26, 2005, Eco-site

To: Rural working families

From: Paul P. Carkeek

Eco-site

Po Box 588

Preston, WA 98050

425-222-5662

penryn@centurytel.net

Date: July 26, 2005

Re: Rural Economic Strategy?

The problem at hand: In King County the trappings of rural economic prosperity are disappearing from the countryside landscape and the rural lifestyle is evolving into a suburban nightmare for rural residents who work from the property they live on.

The Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) RCW 36.70A, upholds the view that rural property owners have the right to live and work in the "rural area." "Urban Growth Areas" (UGA's), like rural cities, the "Forest Production Area" (FPD), "Agriculture Production Area" (APD) and/or "Mineral Resource Lands" are not zoned rural (R-A), however, your rural home is.

RCW 36.70A.030(14) "Rural character" refers to the patterns of land use and development established by a county in the rural element of its comprehensive plan:. . . .

(b) That foster traditional rural lifestyles, rural-based economies, and opportunities to both live and work in rural areas;

(c) That provide visual landscapes that are traditionally found in rural areas and communities;. . . . Emphasis added.

RCW 36.70A.030(15) "Rural development" refers to development outside the urban growth area and outside agricultural, forest, and mineral resource lands designated pursuant to RCW 36.70A.170. Rural development can consist of a variety of uses and residential densities, including clustered residential development, at levels that are consistent with the preservation of rural character and the requirements of the rural element. Rural development does not refer to agriculture or forestry activities that may be conducted in rural areas. Emphasis added.

RCW 36.70A.011--Findings -- Rural lands. The legislature finds that this chapter is intended to recognize the importance of rural lands and rural character to Washington's economy, its people, and its environment, while respecting regional differences. Rural lands and rural-based economies enhance the economic desirability of the state, help to preserve traditional economic activities, and contribute to the state's overall quality of life. The

legislature finds that to retain and enhance the job base in rural areas, rural counties must have flexibility to create opportunities for business development. Further, the legislature finds that rural counties must have the flexibility to retain existing businesses and allow them to expand. The legislature recognizes that not all business developments in rural counties require an urban level of services; and that many businesses in rural areas fit within the definition of rural character identified by the local planning unit. **Finally, the legislature finds that in defining its rural element under RCW 36.70A.070(5), a county should foster land use patterns and develop a local vision of rural character that will: Help preserve rural-based economies and traditional rural lifestyles; encourage the economic prosperity of rural residents; foster opportunities for small-scale, rural-based employment and self-employment; permit the operation of rural-based agricultural, commercial, recreational, and tourist businesses that are consistent with existing and planned land use patterns;** be compatible with the use of the land by wildlife and for fish and wildlife habitat; foster the private stewardship of the land and preservation of open space; **and enhance the rural sense of community and quality of life.** [2002 c 212 § 1.] Emphasis added.

Consistency with the goals, terms, and meanings of state-wide regulations is the first step in local planning documenting compliance with GMA. As provide above, the terms “rural character” and “family wage jobs” are synonymous and inextricably tied together creating the glue that holds the rural area together. Nonetheless, a lack of appropriate reaction to GMA directives, King County Comprehensive Plan Policies, and hands-on experience with **real world** rural area practices is endangering what elected officials have advertised as the product of their labors: **“preserving rural character for future generations.”**

The Department of Development and Environmental Services (DDES) is charged with administering increasingly strict regulatory controls over rural economics that appeared over a decade ago. For instance, in 1993 Ordinance 10870 (Section 536 Home occupations) was codified and for the first time in the history of King County urban, suburban, and rural small scale home grown family enterprises were being seen as “one in the same”, and together challenged and eliminated. Enforcement of flawed development standards absent the aim of corrective measures has inadvertently led DDES to assumptions that obscure the essence of rural area economics or “sense of community and quality of life.”

For this reason, the current code regulating “Home occupations” has been found to lack clarity (applicability) and the flexibility to sustain or support a needed and identified balanced approach to the preservation of all essential elements of rural character. Despite State and local legislation to prevent the misuse of code enforcement, the corrections found herein are being allowed and/or helped to “fall between the cracks.”

For instance: Many times I have heard County staff discuss farm and/or forest production areas and use the term “Rural Character”, and later refer to the rest of the rural area as “residential.” The effort to loosen the current rural economic stranglehold on rural lifestyles has gone unnoticed by King County’s regulator, (DDES). Currently DDES code enforcement staff estimate 20% of their caseload

are actions taken to shutdown home grown rural small scale enterprises.

Attachment No. 1 and 2 provide clarification and the amendments the King County Council crafted last year to again remind DDES of its obligation to react to legal legislative enactments as required by the King County Comprehensive Plan, Chapter Three: The Rural Economy. DDES is also charged with implementing legislative directives. The King County Comprehensive Plan provides a “glossary” of terms that includes the meaning of the word “**shall**” when used in official land use policies:

Shall: To guide King County, the use of the terms “shall,” “will,” “should,” and “may” in policies determine the level of discretion the County can exercise in making future and specific land use, budget, development regulation and other decisions. “Shall” and “will” in a policy mean that it is mandatory for the County to carry out the policy, even if a timeframe is not included. “Shall” and “will” are imperative and nondiscretionary – the County must make decisions based on what the policy says to do. “Should” in a policy provides noncompulsory guidance, and establishes that the County has some discretion in making decisions. “May” in a policy means that it is in the County’s interest to carry out the policy, but the County has total discretion in making decisions. Emphasis added.

Notwithstanding the simplicity of this public duty: almost five (5) years have elapsed since Comprehensive Plan Policy R-106 was originally adopted in 2000. It gathered dust while DDES actively eliminated rural character and family wage jobs one after another. The unimplemented Comprehensive Plan Policy R-106 was designed to provide a crosswalk ramp up approach for protection of family wage jobs and other worthy rural qualities. This legislative directive would have established the appropriate conditions to lay the necessary ground work making it possible to evaluate facts, and recommend unified changes to County regulations based on educated deductions.

Last year R-106 was amended to strike 2001 and indicate 2005 as the “deadline” for DDES to recommend code changes, for review by the King County Council by December 31. Also King County adopted **new** Policy R-107. However, because of recent conversations I have had with DDES high level staff, I do not believe DDES is willing to pay attention to existing rural area criteria developed under mandatory GMA rural requirements e.g. RCW 36.70A.070(5)(b), County-wide Planning Policy FW-9, and/or the King County Comprehensive Plan Policies.

King County/DDES is advertising an “interest” in ideas about how to ensure the economic viability of the rural area “while maintaining its character”, yet DDES has made no effort to inventory the existing family wage producing jobs existing, and/or “**review its regulations and programs to preserve this component of the County’s Rural Area.**”

It is important to review development regulations to determine possible conflicts and issues of code enforcement that threaten existing small businesses. This review would also identify the type and scope of regulations needed to preserve

existing traditional "family-wage jobs." King County's meetings to gather public comments regarding a "Rural Economic Strategy" are thus hampered, and therefore may result in a GMA noncompliant, odd, and ineffective outcome.

The "variety" of existing uses currently at risk during this extended delay includes, but is not limited to the following: roof and gutter repair, welding, plumbing, repair of small and large motors (diesel, gas, and electric), landscaping, irrigation, carpentry, locksmiths, tree service and fireplace wood supply, blacksmith services, window and auto glass repair, excavation, electrician and electronic services, septic service, janitorial services, house cleaning services, building painting services, mobile veterinarian services, roadside vegetables, flowers, eggs, honey and other locally grown and/or manufactured products and services that must employ more than one non-resident and require a vehicle over two and one-half tons of weight capacity, or "heavy equipment" to be kept on the site.

These trades and services are taxed and licensed by the State of Washington to do business in and on property zoned rural. These businesses support already in place permitted developments including farming, forestry, mineral production, homes and business, and recreation. The questions are:

- Do these uses and their associated structures limit and impair Rural Character, and/or preclude any residential use permitted by the underlying zoning?
- Are these uses inextricably linked to rural lifestyle, and therefore important to the general welfare of many, if not all, of the rural population?

In other words: not having the results of the mandatory reviews and assessments in front of you today creates another opportunity for errors, further rural suffering, and does not support the diversity of rural economic activities and cottage industries that currently exist. Be careful about what you ask for because there is a good chance you get that **only**.

Please contact me if you have any questions and/or want to help correct the errors of the past and prevent their recurrence.

Thank you.

Note unable to scan in a readable manner the attachments which are ...

1) The News Release from King County Council dated July 20, 2004 ... Entitled: Proposed Amendments to Comprehensive Plan Update, Protect Character of Rural Areas, Working Farms, and Forests.

2) Comprehensive Plan R-106 and Section 3, The Rural Economy, R 106 and R-107.



Letter from Paul Carkeek: September 12, 2005, Eco-site

September 12, 2005

Julia Larson, Coordinator
Rural Economic Strategies
Office of Business Relations and Economic
Development BOA-EX-2000
701 Fifth Avenue, Suite 2000
Seattle, WA 98104

Re: R-106, Rural Economic Strategies, history, and
recent events:

Dear Ms. Larson:

This message is an expansion of the letter dated July 26, 2005 addressed to "Rural working families" I gave to Ray Moser the same day of the public presentation you made in Carnation about your rural economic strategy. By now you should be aware, the King County "zoning code" holds the majority of economic uses seen in rural areas are not legal uses under 21A30.080 & 090: Home occupation(s), and Home industry respectively. These standards are easily exceeded by a neighborhood lemonade stand.

Over the years I have assisted several rural working families engaged in Cottage industries who have found themselves under the scrutiny of DOES code enforcement. For that reason, I have been asked by persons engaged in economic activities that take place on residential property within unincorporated King County to comment on this issue and your progress.

There are concerns that King County Comprehensive Plan Policy R- I 07 may lead to unintentional backdoor sprawl and/or the conversion of rural areas to de-facto urban/suburban development. Further, your emphasis on R-107 may well lead to the duplication of existing programs designed to address the needs of farms, forests, and independent rural cities. The emphasis to be put forth should be the importance of protecting other elements of rural character and eliminating counterproductive code enforcements. It is more in keeping with State and local policy to quell the serial damage King County Comprehensive Plan Policy R-1 06 was intended to curtail.

Issues: Cottages are generally associated with rural areas and rural lifestyles. For the purposes of this communication: "Cottage industry" means any activity undertaken for gain or profit and carried on in a rural dwelling, or building accessory to a rural dwelling, by the home owner with or without the assistance

of nonresident employee(s). Jobs by the two's and ten's support the economic needs of many rural people throughout the rural areas of the United States.

As you will find later in this communication, these work activities are inextricably linked to rural lifestyles and are important to the general welfare of the population of Washington State. Some of these services rise to the level of private utilities in the "Rural area" e.g. potable water, and septic services, and others provide necessary infrastructure to support farming, forestry, tourism, and rural cities, unincorporated towns, and neighborhoods.

It is essential you understand these existing rural uses are independent and successful because they operate from the owner's rural residential property. They are not under financial pressure to pay rent for and/or purchase the costly and limited amount of land currently zoned I (Industrial), RB (Regional Business) or O (Office) found in designated Rural Cities e.g. North Bend, Rural Towns e.g. Vashon Island, Rural Neighborhoods e.g. Preston, and/or the "Urban" areas.

In 1990 the Growth Management Act (GMA) came into play regarding future planning for growth in Washington State. Since statewide adoption of GMA, local political subdivisions within the region encountered considerable confusion about what constitutes rural development versus urban and/or suburban development which led to debate and investigation.

One of the many things left unclear was a description and/or definition of what "Rural character" is. Many commentators hypothesized that rural character is anything which existed and/or could be permitted within the rural area. In turn, GMA has been amended several times. Amendments to give a clearer picture of rural character are expected to continue into the future as State and local officials and the public discover elements of the rural area that are essential for preserving, but were never contemplated and not protected.

After King County adopted its first Comprehensive Plan (1994) under GMA rural residents began to feel the heat. The "heat" I refer to is: the friction of too many things to do in too little time. The consequence is misdirected code enforcement actions against rural families and great unnecessary suffering.

Approximately a year after the 1994 Comprehensive Plan was adopted, it was explained to me by Lori Grant, who worked as a senior planner for the King County Office of Regional Policy and Planning (ORPP), that ORPP was aware there was a gap between the code and elements of rural character. ORPP was under great pressure to finish a plan within the time fixed for compliance, and there was not enough time to attend to all issues, and it did not appear to ORPP to be crucial to the process, or to fix the deficiency right away.

Therefore: among other good things the current King County zoning code secures, is the right to ride horses for pleasure, raise llamas for fun, have a family garden, and go fishing in the rural area. However, the right to work and live in the rural area and earn enough to support a family while contributing to rural character and the rural economy is not allowed under code as it should be.

It is not the intention of GMA, County-wide Planning Policies, or King County's Comprehensive Plan to "snuff out" independent traditional rural family-wage jobs. "Urban Growth Areas" (UGA's) e.g. the rural cities, the "Forest Production Area" (FPD), "Agriculture Production Area" (APD), and "Mineral Resource Lands" are not zoned R-A (rural area). King County code boilerplate provides directives to insure preservation of basic rural concepts.

KCC 21A.04.060 Rural area zone.

A. The purpose of the rural zone (RA) is to provide for an area-wide long-term rural character and to minimize land use conflicts with nearby agricultural or forest production districts or mineral extraction sites. These purposes are accomplished by:

1. Limiting residential densities and permitted uses to those that are compatible with rural character and nearby resource production districts and sites and are able to be adequately supported by rural service levels;

2. Allowing small scale farming and forestry activities and tourism and recreation uses that can be supported by rural service levels and that are compatible with rural character;

3. Increasing required setbacks to minimize conflicts with adjacent agriculture, forest or mineral zones; and ... (Ord. 14045 § 1, 2001; Ord. 11621 § 10, 1994: **Ord.10870 § 27, 1993). Emphasis added.**

Nonetheless, for over a decade the Department of Development and Environmental Services (DDES) has administered progressively strict regulatory controls over rural economics.

In 1993 Ordinance 10870 (Section 536 Home occupations) was codified, and for the first time in the history of King County, urban, suburban, and rural area small scale home grown family enterprises were being seen as "one in the same", and together challenged and eliminated. Enforcement of flawed development standards absent the aim of corrective statewide and local measures has inadvertently led DDES to assumptions that obscure the essence of rural area economics or "sense of community and quality of life."

Moreover, it appears from the legislative history, which began as far back as 1958, regulations under KCC 21A.30.080 & 090 (Home occupation(s), and industries) were never intended for "Rural areas." In short, DDES has been engaging in the indiscriminate destruction of rural character, and it may well be this damage is based on ORPP's original omission (error).

There are serious concerns regarding the information available on the King County website set up to enlighten the public about the course of action your "Rural Economic Strategies" team has taken so far during this effort. Therefore, I would like to have your response to the following comments and questions as soon as you can provide them:

The problem at hand: In King County the trappings of rural economic

prosperity are disappearing from the countryside landscape, and the rural lifestyle is evolving into a suburban nightmare for rural residents who work from the property they live on. GMA (RCW 36.70A), upholds the statewide view that rural property owners have the right to live and work in the "rural area."

RCW 36.70A.030(14) "Rural character" refers to the patterns of land use and development established by a county in the rural element of its comprehensive plan: .

(b) That foster traditional rural lifestyles, rural-based economies, and opportunities to both live and work in rural areas:

(c) That provide visual landscapes that are traditionally found in rural areas and communities;... . Emphasis added.

RCW 36.70A.030(15) "Rural development" refers to development outside the urban growth area and outside agricultural, forest, and mineral resource lands designated pursuant to RCW 36.70A.170. Rural development can consist of a variety of uses and residential densities, including clustered residential development, at levels that are consistent with the preservation of rural character and the requirements of the rural element. Rural development does not refer to agriculture or forestry activities that may be conducted in rural areas. Emphasis added.

RCW 36.70A.011-Findings - Rural lands. The legislature finds that this chapter is intended to recognize the importance of rural lands and rural character to Washington's economy, its people, and its environment, while respecting regional differences. Rural lands and rural-based economies enhance the economic desirability of the state, help to preserve traditional economic activities, and contribute to the state's overall quality of life. The legislature finds that to retain and enhance the job base in rural areas, rural counties must have flexibility to create opportunities for business development. Further, the legislature finds that rural counties must have the flexibility to retain existing businesses and allow them to expand, The legislature recognizes that not all business developments in rural counties require an urban level of services; and that many businesses in rural areas fit within the definition of rural character identified by the local planning unit. Finally, the legislature finds that in defining its rural element under RCW 36.70A.070/51, a county should foster land use patterns and develop a local vision of rural character that will: Help preserve rural based economies and traditional rural lifestyles; encourage the economic prosperity of rural residents; foster opportunities for small-scale, rural-based employment and self-employment; permit the operation of rural-based agricultural, commercial, recreational, and tourist businesses that are consistent with existing and planned land use patterns; be compatible with the use of the land by wildlife and for fish and wildlife habitat; foster the private stewardship of the land and preservation of open space; and enhance the rural sense of community and quality of life. [2002 c 212 § 1.] Emphasis added.

"Consistency" with the goals, terms, and meanings of state-wide regulations is the first step in local planners documenting compliance with GMA. As provided above, the terms rural character and "family wage jobs" are synonymous and inextricably tied together creating the bits and pieces that hold the rural area together. Nonetheless, the lack of appropriate reaction to the GMA directives

above, Countywide Planning Policies e.g. FW-9, and the King County Comprehensive Plan e.g. Policies (R-105, R-106, &R-107, and hands-on experience with real world rural area economic practices, are endangering what elected officials have advertised as the product of their labors: "preserving rural character for future generations." King County lawmakers found the current code regulating "Home occupations and industries" to be deficient in clarity, lacking the flexibility to sustain a needed and identified balanced approach to the preservation of all essential elements of rural character.

The original version of KCCP policy R-I 06 was discussed in Committee and then went before the entire Council during "public legislative hearings" and was blessed with passage by all Councilmembers in attendance voting "Aye" (yes), and by the Executive with the approval of the 2000 Comprehensive Plan. This language as promulgated provided directives (e.g.) "shall"..., and contained performance requirements (e.g.) "by December 31, 2001." Unfortunately, the intent, or "Effect" of R-106 has been ignored by King County administrators since its adoption. See Attachment No.1.

Are you also going to ignore the intent of R-I 06? Can you ask the King County Growth Management & Unincorporated Areas Committee to provide more guidance and perhaps avoid creating another bureaucratic (staff) problem regarding the analysis referred to in R-I06?

Despite State and local legislation to prevent the misuse of code enforcement, the corrections found herein are being allowed and/or helped to "fall between the cracks." For instance: Many times I have heard County staff discuss farm and/or forest production areas and use the term rural character, and later refer to the rest of the rural area as "residential." Residential infers urban and/or suburban development and uses.

The effort to loosen the current rural economic stranglehold on rural lifestyles has gone unnoticed by King County's regulator (DDES), and now apparently you. Currently DDES code enforcement staff estimate 20% of their caseload are actions taken to shut down home grown rural small scale enterprises.

Attachments No. I, 2 and 3 provide the clarity you need to emphasize. The amendments the King County Council crafted last year reiterated the promises King County made to rural residents, and reminded DDES of its obligation to react to legal legislative enactments as required. As you can see, last year R-I06 was amended to strike 2001 and indicate 2005 as the "deadline" for DDES to recommend code changes for review by December 31.

The King County Comprehensive Plan provides a "glossary" of terms that includes the meaning of the word "shall" when used in official land use policies:

Shall: To guide King County, the use of the terms "shall," 'will,' 'should,' and 'may' in policies determine the level of discretion the County can exercise in making future and specific land use,

budget, development regulation and other decisions. 'Shall' and 'will' in a policy mean that it is mandatory for the County to carry out the policy, even if a timeframe is not included. "Shall" and 'will' are Imperative and nondiscretionary - the County must make decisions based on what the policy says to do. 'Should' in a policy provides noncompulsory guidance, and establishes that the County has some discretion in making decisions. 'May' in a policy means that it is in the County's interest to carry out the policy, but the County has total discretion in making decisions. Emphasis added.

Notwithstanding the simplicity of this public duty: almost five (5) years have elapsed since Comprehensive Plan Policy R-1 06 was originally adopted in 2000. It gathered dust while DDES actively eliminated rural character and family wage jobs one after another.

The unimplemented Comprehensive Plan Policy (R-I06) was designed to provide a crosswalk ramp up approach for protection of family wage jobs and other worthy rural qualities. This legislative directive would have, and still is to establish the appropriate conditions to lay the necessary ground work making it possible to evaluate facts, and recommend unified changes to County regulations based on educated deductions.

However, because *of* conversations I gave had with DDES high level staff, and the public presentation you made in Carnation, I do not believe DDES or you are enthusiastic about paying attention to existing rural area criteria developed under mandatory GMA rural requirements e.g. RCW 36.70A.070(5)(b), County-wide Planning Policy FW-9, and/or the King County Comprehensive Plan Policies R-105, R-106, and R-107.

You have advertised "interest" in rural citizens' ideas about preserving the economic viability of the County's rural area while maintaining its character, yet your website reveals you have made no effort to "review code regulations under R-I 06. It is important for you to review development regulations to determine possible conflicts and issues *of* code enforcement that threaten existing small rural businesses. This review would also identify the type and scope of regulations needed to preserve existing rural "family-wage jobs. "Your meetings to gather public comments regarding a "Rural Economic Strategy" are thus hampered, and therefore may result in a GMA noncompliant, odd, and ineffective outcome.

Your website provides a list of some of the existing uses currently at risk and/or lost during this extended delay e.g.: roof and gutter repair, welding, plumbing, repair of small and large motors (diesel gas, and electric), landscaping, irrigation, carpentry, locksmiths, tree service and fireplace wood supply, blacksmith services, window and auto glass repair, excavation, electrician and electronic services, septic service, janitorial services, house cleaning services, building painting services, mobile veterinarian services, roadside vegetables, flowers, eggs, honey and other locally grown and/or manufactured products and services.

To be viable, most of these cottage industries must exceed existing code standards and employ more than one non-resident and require vehicles over two and one-half tons of weight capacity, or need to have "heavy equipment" kept on the site. Your list of existing cottage industries is a good start, however you also need to provide the analysis R -106 requires. These trades and services are taxed and licensed by the State of Washington to do business in and on property zoned rural (RA). These businesses support already in place permitted development including farming, forestry, mineral production, homes, businesses, recreation, rural cities and are "supported by rural service levels", and generate what the current code has been wrongfully eliminating from the landscape: "Rural character." The questions you need to answer are:

- Do these uses and their associated structures limit and impair rural character, and/or preclude any residential use permitted by the underlying zoning?
- Are these uses inextricably linked to the rural lifestyle, and therefore important to the general welfare of the rural population, if not all of King County?

In other words: the consequences of not having the results of the mandatory reviews and assessments in front of you and/or the participants in the public meetings so far held, creates another opportunity for errors, furthers rural suffering, and is a waste of taxpayers time and money. Additionally, your effort to date does not support the diversity of rural economic activities or cottage industries that currently exist, and is contrary to your mission as explained in documents (policies & laws) generated by King County and Washington State.

It could be construed an attempt to mislead the King County Council and citizens is on going, and could shift the rural vision to a suburban agenda. On July 19, 2005 The Growth Management and Unincorporated Areas Committee met and a briefing was given (item No.4, 2005-B0094). Karen Wolf, Ray Moser, and you reviewed the "Rural Economic Strategies" so far investigated. Karen Wolf stated any actions must comport to GMA directives, King County Comprehensive Plan Policies, and **create the capacity for rural residents to live and work in the rural area**. Karen Wolf told the Committee the reason for doing so is outlined in Policies R-106 & R-107. The information on your website makes no reference to R-106. Why not?

Will you please provide me with the budget description of your mission and/or any other directives regarding what you are assigned to do? Have you, or anyone else officially connected to this effort, contacted DOES regarding its regulations governing Home occupations and Home industry and/or code enforcement undertaken to enforce these flawed standards?

You and I had a telephone conversation long before any of the public meetings were set to elicit comments from attendees on opportunities and unmet needs to be targeted. Nonetheless, I received no notices, and by chance found out about the Carnation meeting. The intent of R-107 is to invite and inform interested

citizens of discussions, meetings and/or public gatherings for the purpose of formatting approaches for fulfillment of this mandated action, and your results. Will you let me know about any further stake-holder meetings and/or events held to discuss this issue?

I will be asking Mr. Constantine to again hold a public meeting to allow comment on the Rural Economic Strategies you are preparing as was done on July 19, 2005. I hope you will redirect your efforts to encompass the principals R-106 tries to facilitate.

Sincerely:

~.~~/

Paul P. Carkeek

Eco Site
PO Box 588
Preston Washington
98050 425-222-5662
cc:

The Honorable Dow Constantine, Chair of the King County Growth Management & Unincorporated Areas Committee, and King County Council Members.

The Honorable Ron Sims, King County Executive

Note unable to scan in a readable manner the attachments which are ...

- 1) R-106 – B- dated 7/18/2000 – Amendment to Attachment A to Proposed Ordinance 2000-0186, Dated June 29, 2000, Sponsored by David Irons
- 2) The News Release from King County Council dated July 20, 2004 ... Entitled: Proposed Amendments to Comprehensive Plan Update, Protect Character of Rural Areas, Working Farms, and Forests.
- 3) Comprehensive Plan R-106 and Section 3, The Rural Economy, R 106 and R-107.

Email from Kathleen Fitch, Economic Development for a Sustainable Vashon

Received: October 6, 2005

To Julia Larson – Coordinator Rural Economic Strategy
Office of Business Relations and Economic Development

Many of the members of EDSV have individually provided input into the King County Rural Economic Strategy Plan via e mail and participating in your town hall meeting.

EDSV, which comprises of several Vashon Business owners/managers have organized to have a strong voice in the health and well being of Vashon's Economic Process. To this end, as the present chair of the EDSV group, I have prepared the following letter for incorporation into the first draft of the Rural Economic Strategy Plan.

- Affordable housing

A major area of concern for all businesses, service/retail/manufacturing, is the limited affordable housing on the island. Without adequate staffing Vashon's business's ability to maintain quality service, provide acceptable open hours, (which is critical to servicing the commuter population) or pursue expansion opportunities are eroding. It also gives pause for any entrepreneur to open a new business even if it qualifies as a need for the island community.

The 1996 Vashon Town Plan states:

A Town to serve Islanders' needs: provide affordable housing

Vashon Household has begun to address this issue, which we are very grateful, but future plans to locate affordable housing within the Town proper as history has proved over and over and over again is a failed plan.

Affordable housing plans must be located throughout our island proper, such as in Burton, Dockton and Ellisport areas. This requires certain zoning laws be lifted to permit the affordable housing be built in areas mentioned above.

Foster economic opportunities that are aligned with the islands resources, unique competitive advantages and values.

Encourage various governmental institutions to assist startup non-profit organizations that focus as a learning/teaching center for pacific region and Pacific Rim. Specific focus would be sustainability centers as well as a human rights center. Both areas have various grass roots movements on the island.

- Assist non-profit & for profit small business owners in purchasing commercial buildings for their business through various governmental incentives

As commercial property values increase - potentially rental leases will follow suit. Business owners offering services/products to the community at a reasonable rate will be unable to absorb the increased costs/or pass through their services/products and stay a viable business.

A potential scenario resulting from the above:

Commercial building owners requiring higher leases, which in turn will become unsustainable by the current businesses, will pursue businesses that focus more on tourist's dollars. This will push to heighten level the selling of Vashon as a "major tourist" destination.

This culture will almost single handily change the rural quiet community which is focused on agriculture, forestry, sustainability center, research & human rights center and especially hi tech businesses to a tourism town similar to Mercer Island.

The Economic Development for a Sustainable Vashon, EDSV, thanks' you for this opportunity to have a strong voice in this process and including our points within the Rural Economic Strategies report forthcoming.

Kathleen Fitch

EDSV Representative



Vashon-Maury Island
Community Council
Serving Vashon-Maury Island since 1933



***Letter from James English, Vashon Maury Island
Community Council***

P O B o x 2 8 1

V a s h o n , W A 9 8 0 7 0

October 18, 2005

Julia L. Larson
Coordinator, Rural Economic Strategies
King County Office of Business Relations
701 Fifth Avenue, Suite 200
Seattle, WA 98104-7097

Dear Ms. Larson:

The Vashon Maury Island Community Council wishes to provide these initial recommendations and input regarding the Rural Economic Strategies plan you are coordinating for King County. VMICC formed an Ad Hoc Economic Committee to provide a focus on economic issues pertaining to Vashon and Maury Island, and its recommendations have been considered by the Community Council in developing these initial recommendations.

The Community Council provides the following recommendations for consideration by King County as it develops its Rural Economic Strategies plan:

- VMICC endorses the general principles and policies as articulated in the King County Vashon Community Plan, completed in 1986, and the 1996 Vashon Town Plan. document. Relevant portions of these documents are enclosed for your reference.
- The County should support value-added agriculture and forestry, as well as agricultural and forestry activities as identified in prior Vashon planning documents.
- The County should create a more favorable economic environment for start-up businesses which are consistent with a rural environment. Support in-home businesses.
- The County should provide a more flexible implementation of County requirements so as to not impose urban requirements and practices on a rural environment. See goals and policies in Vashon Town Plan and Vashon Community Plan for specific examples. County departments need to communicate more effectively with each other and with the Vashon community regarding County actions being taken.

We understand that we will be provided further opportunities for review and comment as you develop and circulate a draft of the County's Rural Economic Strategies plan. We

trust these initial recommendations will help guide the County on its development of plans and policies that will be consistent with the needs and goals of Vashon and Maury Island.

Sincerely,

James T. English, President
Vashon-Maury Island Community Council
Email: jim_english@amerifresh.com
(206) 463-3044

Ronald Leaders
Chair, Economic Committee
Email: rleaders@contractsolutionsgroup.com
(206) 463-7434
encls.

APPENDIX D: Comments on Draft Rural Economic Strategies

This appendix contains comments received on the Public Review Draft of the Rural Economic Strategies Report.

Letter from Mark Timken

Julia Larson
Office of Business Relations and Economic Development
King County, Mail Code: BOA-EX-2000
701 Fifth Avenue, STE 2000
Seattle, WA 98104-7097

Dear Julia,

Thank you for sending the public review draft to the Vashon Island Growers Association. I am very grateful for the work you have done. I realize it has been a long process and I appreciate your continued efforts. As a farmer/grower I want to highlight several aspects of the importance of agriculture on Vashon Island in relationship to the Rural Economic Review Draft.

- Through direct Marketing agriculture provides a link between growers and customers. This relationship is a key point to the future of economic development on Vashon. By keeping local dollars within the local community, agriculture works as a basis for the economic future. Whether it is a farm stand, the Farmers Collective, the Farmers Market, or farms selling CSA shares, today's farmers are working to create viable ways to make a livable wage.
- More and more food safety and reliability have become critical factors for our customers. People want to know where their food was grown and by whom.
- Farm land and open space brings a value of life that is quickly being forgotten in today's world. Farmers are using techniques to sustain the land over time to help foster a healthy ecological system and a healthy population.
- Sales at the Vashon Farmers Market have exploded over 215% over the past six years. During the 2005 growing season over 10,000 shoppers came to the market seeking agricultural and craft products from local island businesses. The demand continues to grow at an exciting pace.
- The Vashon Island Growers Association has sponsored and brought films and speakers to the island educating the island residents to eat responsibly.

As a farmer/ grower on Vashon Island I agree with the direction of the review draft and I trust that its emphasis on agriculture being the basis of this economic growth will continue. I am in favor of keeping the current strategies in place for the final draft of the document.

Thank you,

Signed

Mark Timken
16531 Westside Hwy SW
Vashon, WA 98070

Email from Joshua Monaghan

From: JOSHUA.MONAGHAN
Sent: Thursday, December 01, 2005 10:22 AM
To: Larson, Julia
Subject: on Econ Strategy Report

Hi Julia,

I am the lead farm planner at the King Conservation District. We work with rural landowners and farmers and are very concerned about the decline of ag industry in the COunty. I have been looking over your report, and I'm excited that the County is working on this effort. Here at the Conservation District we continually search for ways to promote and support the sustainability of local farming enterprises.

I took some time and skimmed the report. The economic breakdowns were interesting and may help us better serve our local ag enterprises. Thank you.

QUESTION: In reading "B. Economic Profile..., 5. Ag. Sector", I read that "half of the farms in King County sell livestock, poultry, and related products, although these farms are mostly raising chickens." Chicken raising accounts for a very small amount of the farming activities that we see, and so I wonder where this info comes from? Is this true?

I look forward to hearing more on this. Thanks again for your report.

Sincerely,

Josh

Joshua Monaghan, Lead Farm Planner
King Conservation District
935 Powell Ave SW Renton, WA 98055
425-277-5581 ext 130

Email from Liz Reynolds

From: Liz Reynolds [mailto:derzil@mytangledweb.com]

Sent: Tuesday, November 29, 2005 4:45 PM

To: Larson, Julia

Subject: response to rural Economic Development.

It is absolutely appalling to think that King County would consider placing a poultry processing plant here in Enumclaw.

We, the city of Enumclaw, are at a crossroads' of our economic future and working desperately and spending thousands of dollars to hopefully adopt a tourism plan.

For King Co . to consider a poultry slaughter house in our area is unacceptable.

Our location and proximity to Mt. Rainier lends itself very well to tourism potentials.

Thousands of cars pass through Enumclaw on the way to Mt rainier as well as to Crystal Mountain

King Co. council has always placed Enumclaw in the "forgotten" zone . Look at their management of the King Co. fairgrounds for instance.

Obviously, you did not speak with many people regarding this issue or you chose to speak to a very limited and targeted audience.

Would you like a poultry slaughterhouse in your town?

And on another note why not try and help Enumclaw develop tourism instead you are hampering our possibilities with such negative thought and considerations

I noticed that KC emphasis on tourism was placed on Vashon and Snoqualmie.. Obviously dollars speak loud and heaven forbid you consider placing a poultry slaughter facility in their backyard.

I will work diligently and tirelessly to make sure that your road is a hard one to travel in regards to this project and that it never comes to fruition.

You are as bad as Wal-Mart

Shame on you

Sincerely,

Liz Reynolds

***Email from Amy Grotta, Washington State University
Extension***

From: Grotta, Amy

Sent: Tuesday, November 29, 2005 1:28 PM

To: Larson, Julia

Subject: rural economic strategies draft comments

Julia,

Thank you for sharing your draft document with me. I found it to be very thorough and offer the following comments as related to the forestry action items.

1. RES-F2 (Low Impact Infrastructure): What about some sort of mobile sawmill apprenticeship? In order to be a good operator of a mobile sawmill one needs not only the money to buy a mill, but also specialized expertise. Could KC figure out a way to provide an apprenticeship, and/or a startup loan for someone interested in starting this as a business? Most of the big mobile sawmill manufacturers offer training to people that buy one of their mills, so maybe providing a loan would be the way to go. Or, another idea -- work with King County Parks, so that when they start drawing wood out of the parks system to mill on-site, this is an apprentice opportunity for someone who wants to learn to operate a mobile mill.

The closure of the Weyerhaeuser mills several years ago displaced a number of workers. Though many may have moved on to other jobs by now, this would seem to be an ideal pool of people to recruit into providing "low impact infrastructure". I don't know how one would go about tracking them down, but targeting Snoqualmie and Enumclaw would be a good bet. Another option for recruitment might be voc-tech programs at high schools or maybe even community colleges?

This is obviously not a particularly well-formed idea, but just something I've been thinking about.

2. RES-F2 (Green Building Certification): As I understand it, the LEED or BuiltGreen programs don't award points based on the sourcing of wood, other than if the wood is FSC certified. While FSC-certified wood is worthy of points, currently there is no FSC certified wood produced in King County (other than potentially, from the Cedar River Watershed). I feel that there has to be a way to reward the use of local forest products in building. Could King County, City of Seattle, or some other public agency set the standard by incorporating this into the design of some future building project? Maybe contract with the Vashon Forest Stewards to purchase trim or flooring from them?

3. RES-F3 (Model Business Plans): I am partnering with the Northwest Natural Resource group on a grant proposal (it's been submitted; we should learn whether it has been accepted sometime next year) titled

"Promoting Income Opportunities for Small Woodland Owners in Western Washington." If funded, one outcome of the proposed work will be to develop business plans based on up to a dozen different forest products ranging from floral greenery to value-added wood products to eco-tourism. This will all be published in a handbook, and my role is to conduct workshops over the next 3 years based around these topics. If you are interested I will send you more details.

4. RES-F3 (Forest Enhancement Events): There is certainly a place at the Small Farm Expo for a forestry educational track or space for vendors who have forestry related businesses. Since the SFE is an Extension program, it should be fairly easy for me to work with the Expo organizers on this in the future, provided that the County agrees that it should be part of my yearly work program.

I look forward to working with you in the next year on your efforts in these areas.

--Amy

Amy Grotta

Extension Educator -- Forest Stewardship

Washington State University Extension -- King County

919 SW Grady Way, Suite 120

Renton, WA 98055

(206) 205-3132 voice

(206) 296-0952 fax

<http://www.metrokc.gov/wsuce/forestry>

Extension programs and employment are available to all without discrimination. Evidence of noncompliance may be reported through your local Extension office.

Email from Rick Spence 4Creeks Unincorporated Area Council

To: Moore, Ghislaine

Sent: Monday, November 28, 2005 9:05 AM

Subject: Message

Hi Ghislaine,

I am really disappointed in this report. I have great concerns about who would be on the citizens board. We don't need more influence by the 1000Friends/Futurewise people. We also want to see real Economic Development. What about allowing cottage industry to be more than a Day Care Center or a Commercial Kitchen. What about the family who's Head of Household owns a Truck/Backhoe to be able to have his equipment at home. Or how about a Graphic Sign Business where an owner could have vehicles come to his home to apply the graphics. Or how about the Well Driller, what's to prevent him from having his equipment at his home. I'm not talking about a home in a neighborhood, I'm talking in the real Rural Community.

It makes all of us in the Rural Area concerned if Ron is listening, Julia's not.

If we have a Citizen Board, let's not make a mockery of it. I would like to see you get real feedback from the real stakeholders, not Louise Miller's Rural Majority. I believe we in the UAC's are the correct venue for this.

Sincerely

Rick Spence
4Creeks UAC, President

Email from Joanne Jewell and Rob Peterson

From: Joanne Jewell and Rob Peterson [<mailto:plumforest@zipcon.net>]
Sent: Wednesday, December 14, 2005 3:45 PM
To: Larson, Julia
Subject: agriculture on Vashon

Julia Larson - julia.larson@metrokc.gov
Office of Business Relations and Economic Development
King County, Mail Code: BOA-EX-2000
701 Fifth Avenue, STE 2000
Seattle, WA 98104-7097

Dear Julia,

Thank you for sending the public review draft to the Vashon Island Growers Association. We are very grateful for the work you have done. We realize it has been a long process and appreciate your continued efforts. As farmers we want to highlight several aspects of the importance of agriculture on Vashon Island in relationship to the Rural Economic Review Draft.

a.. Through direct Marketing agriculture provides a link between growers and customers. This relationship is a key point to the future of economic development on Vashon. By keeping local dollars within the local community, agriculture works as a basis for the economic future. Whether it is a farm stand, the Farmers Collective, the Farmers Market, or farms selling CSA shares, today's farmers are working to create viable ways to make a livable wage.

b.. More and more food safety and reliability have become critical factors for our customers. People want to know where their food was grown and by whom.

c.. Farm land and open space brings a value of life that is quickly being forgotten in today's world. Farmers are using techniques to sustain the land over time to help foster a healthy ecological system and a healthy population.

d.. Sales at the Vashon Farmers Market have exploded over 215% over the past six years. During the 2005 growing season over 10,000 shoppers came to the market seeking agricultural and craft products from local island businesses. The demand continues to grow at an exciting pace.

e.. The Vashon Island Growers Association has sponsored and brought films and speakers to the island educating the island residents to eat responsibly.

As a farmer/ grower on Vashon Island we agree with the direction of the review draft and I trust that its emphasis on agriculture being the basis of this economic growth will continue. We are in favor of keeping the current strategies in place for the final draft of the document.

Thank you,

Signed,
Joanne Jewell and Rob Peterson
Plum Forest Farm
Vashon Island
206-463-3518

P.S. This is a close copy of a letter drafted by Mark Timken of Vashon. We want you to know that we support these ideas completely.

Email from Julie Barnfather

From: Julie Barnfather [mailto:rocknb-ranch@comcast.net]
Sent: Friday, December 16, 2005 11:02 AM
To: Larson, Julia
Subject: Economic Strategies

Dear Ms. Larson:

I'm writing to encourage you to support the creation of a map of all equestrian trails in King County. I think this will be an important tool for economic strategies to promote recreation and tourism in the County. There are a large number of horse owners in this county, and the economic impact is currently (conservatively) estimated in the range of \$80 - \$100 million a year. Documenting and publishing recreational information (maps) will encourage this industry to grow. It's vital to identify missing links, maintain soft surface trails, and to create parking for horse trailers to keep the horse industry thriving in the county.

I appreciate your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Julie Barnfather

Email from Rob Holland

From: RE_HOLLAND
Sent: Friday, December 16, 2005 2:31 PM
To: Larson, Julia
Subject: Great Job on Rural Economic Strategies

Hello Julia,

My name is Rob Holland and I met you at a Farm Bureau meeting shortly after you took the job at King County. I just wanted to say you are doing a great job. I look forward to seeing the finished product.

Rob Holland

Volunteer, American Farmland Trust

"Without truth - without trust- America cannot flourish"
Former President Jimmy Carter

"All political power is inherent in the people, and governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed, and are established to protect and maintain individual rights."

--Washington Constitution Article 1 Section 1

Letter from the City of North Bend



CITY OF NORTH BEND

"Excellence in Government – Pride in Service"

December 12, 2005

Julia Larson, Coordinator
Rural Economic Strategies
Office of Business Relations and Economic Development
BOA-EX-2000
701 Fifth Avenue, Suite 2000
Seattle, WA 98104

RE: Draft Rural Economic Strategies Report for King County

Dear Ms. Larson:

Thank you for the opportunity to review the Draft Rural Economic Strategies Report. Although our office just (last week) received an online version of the November 18, 2005 report due to notification problems, we appreciate the extension of the comment deadline to December 12, 2005. At the December Snoqualmie Valley Governance Association meeting, you mentioned that we could bring suggestions and ideas for economic development to your office at any time and in fact, the report was a reflection of flexibility based on the concerns of the rural communities.

We appreciate the many recommendations and action items written about Snoqualmie Valley within the document. The Rural Economic Strategies (RES) Report is a good step towards bringing together common issues as well as the special and unique elements of the unincorporated areas and small rural cities of King County. At this time, we request the following items be included within the final RES.

- 1) Generally, there are several statements in the RES about supporting King County policies and regulations. In the final RES please include statements on the county's commitment to coordinate and support City of North Bend policies as set forth in our Comprehensive Plan, for the Urban Growth Area (UGA) and area of influence surrounding the UGA. In particular completion of an Interlocal Agreement regulating development activity within the UGA to conform with City standards is a critical issue to North Bend as you noted at the December 2005 Snoqualmie Valley Governance Association meeting.
- 2) Page 15, RES: Please add the following sentence to the criteria for ideas and recommendations incorporated into the RES Strategies and Action Items:
"Is the idea or recommendation in compliance with the City of North Bend Planning Policies?" (Perhaps list by name all of the Rural Cities in the criteria section of the RES.)
The request for the additional criteria into the final RES helps address item 1 above.

City Hall
211 Main Ave. N.
Phone (425) 888-1211
Fax (425) 831-6200

Community Services
126 E. Fourth St.
Phone (425) 888-5633
Fax (425) 888-5636

Fire Department
112 W. Second
Phone (425) 888-0242
Fax (425) 888-5275

Public Works
1155 E. North Bend Way
Phone (425) 888-0486
Fax (425) 888-3502

Sheriff's Office
1550 Boalch Ave. NW
Phone (425) 888-4433
Phone (206) 296-0612
Fax (206) 296-0929

P.O. Box 896, North Bend, WA 98045 <http://ci.north-bend.wa.us>
Printed on Recycled Paper

- 3) Edit on page 21: Infrastructure Improvement Application paragraph. The last line says that the projects from receipt of the federal Economic Development Administration would create jobs for the lower Snoqualmie Valley. Please delete the word "lower".
- 4) Way Finding and Standardized Signage / Tourism Enhancement Program
"KC Office of Business Relations and Economic Development (BRED), the KC Roads Division, KC Parks & Recreation Division, and 4Culture, in partnership with Snoqualmie Valley Governments Association, the State of Washington, and others are working to develop a pilot project for thematic and consistent signage for parks, historical, cultural, scenic, and other sites throughout the area to enhance the tourism market in the Snoqualmie Valley." Page 7, RES.

The City of North Bend supports the feasibility work of the Way Finding Signage group and would like to be involved in this collaborative effort that benefits the entire Snoqualmie Valley. Thank you for bringing together all of the players for this important project.

My final comment is to thank your office for paying special attention to the significant challenge created by the lack of water rights in the City of North Bend and the Sallal Water Association (North Bend UGA). This challenge, as you are aware, has been the City's highest priority for over six years to date. We are grateful for King County's support through assistance in preparing the federal Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant application. We are very interested in building on this partnership by completing an interlocal agreement to regulate development activity within the UGA to conform with City standards as a step to facilitate future annexation of the UGA.

In conclusion, we'd like to reserve the opportunity to provide additional comment after we have more time to review the RES Report by all City staff and officials. On behalf of the City of North Bend, we would look forward to being in partnership with the county by supporting economic development activities and programs so that all of our citizens in Snoqualmie Valley receive benefit with a strong future.

Sincerely,

CITY OF NORTH BEND



Mayor Kenneth G. Hearing

cc: Ron Sims, Metropolitan King County Executive
Kathy Lambert, Metropolitan King County Councilmember
George Northcroft, Director King County Business Relations & Economic Development
Fuzzy Fletcher, Mayor, City of Snoqualmie
Matt Larson, Mayor-Elect, City of Snoqualmie
Bob Larson, City Administrator, City of Snoqualmie
Yvonne Funderberg, Mayor, City of Carnation
Bill Brandon, City Manager, City of Carnation
Will Ibershof, Mayor, City of Duvall
Doreen Booth, City Hall Administrator, City of Duvall
George Martinez, City Administrator, City of North Bend

Email from Palmer Coking Coal Company

FROM: Palmer Coking Coal Company

DATE: November 23, 2005

TO: Julia Larson, Coordinator

Ms. Larson:

Thank you for providing us with an e-mail version of the Rural Economic Strategies Report (Public Review Draft). I have read the report and have the following comment.

The Rural Economic Strategies (RES) seems to be heavily weighted towards agriculture, forestry, and tourism with nary a mention of the another important component of the rural landscape: mineral extraction. The early settling of King County and its continued growth into the 21st century could not be imaginable without mention of the mining, processing and extraction of minerals. The early settlers to King County in large part came here to mine coal to fuel the growing economy of California and later the energy needs of the state of Washington. Clay mining for the production of bricks helped build the region's early buildings. Our vast system of freeways, roads, and trails could not have been built without a heavy reliance on the mining and extraction of sand, gravel and rock. Throughout the ages, many mining enterprises have been located in the more rural areas of King County. The realities of land uses dictate that many mineral extractions sites will be located in and around rural King County.

We believe the RES should acknowledge the important contribution that mineral resources have played in the development and continued economic vitality of King County. We further believe that the RES should acknowledge that the rural areas will likely play an important future role in the continued production of the mineral resources that allow a nearby urban culture to thrive.

Thank you for this opportunity to improve the Rural Economic Strategies Public Review Draft.

**William Kombol, Manager
Palmer Coking Coal Company
P.O. Box 10 / 31407 Highway 169
Black Diamond, WA 98010-0010**

telephone: 425-432-4700

telephone: 360-886-2841

fax: 425-432-3883

website: palmercc.com Click here: Palmer Coking Coal Co. - Home Page

e-mail: palmercokingcoal@aol.com

Email from Martin Koenig

DATED; December 10, 2005

TO: Julia L. Larson

Julia,

Thank you for emailing me your initial draft. I want to make several points, consistent with comments I have repeatedly made both in island meetings and in conversations with you.

First, unless I missed it, I saw no reference to the question of the appropriate scale of economic development for our island. This is important, so that we have common understanding of the content of your report.

Secondly, there is no reference to the positions on cultural tourism presented on the CD I provided you. The island-wide public meeting recorded on the CD was held specifically to discuss cultural tourism, and should be a useful resource in defining community opinion on cultural tourism; instead it is being ignored. At that meeting, as recorded on the CD, people identified themselves and were very clear in their reluctance to encourage increased tourism to the island. Many of these people were artists.

In the draft report, you write: "Additionally, the Vashon artist community is well established and *would like to increase tourist and regional sales of their ware...*" It is clear from the CD that the artists on Vashon do not speak with one voice, as your statement leads the reader to believe.

It would be more accurate to have either of these statements in your report: "The Vashon artist community is interested in increasing regional sales of their wares, but have different opinions about increasing tourism to the island," or "Vashon artists, like the rest of the Vashon community are divided when it comes to the issue of increasing tourism to the island." What you have written just is not accurate. I hope it will be corrected in the next draft.

It is important to acknowledge that economic development on Vashon-Maury island has a natural organized constituency in the Chamber and island businesses. Many other islanders, including some artists, are not naturally inclined to attend meetings on the topic of economic development. However, the issue of cultural tourism would likely draw a large group, as it did several years ago. This is because we islanders have a strong sense of place, and sense of what it means to live in a rural area.

This was also reflected in the Community Council comments submitted for your draft. I am not certain exactly how many islanders voted for the submittal of those comments, but it was many times larger than the number of people who have attended the meetings of the economic development committee. I believe the vote is an indication of how we value the agricultural and forestry activities in our community, part of our sense of place. It is important to note that at that meeting, there was no discussion of the possibility of increasing cultural tourism.

What you have written just is not accurate. I hope it will be corrected in the next draft.

Sincerely,
Martin Koenig

Letter from Brad Gaolach , WSU; King County Extension

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY



KING COUNTY EXTENSION

BOA-EX-2000

701 Fifth Avenue, Suite 2000
Seattle, WA 98104

Dear Ms Larson:

As Director of Washington State University King County Extension (KCE), I would like to make a few specific comments about the Agriculture Cluster section of your draft Rural Economic Strategies Report.

In the background section, you accurately list and describe key programs KCE currently have that are grant funded. One of my concerns is that there are no specific strategies or action items associated with the Livestock Program. The urgent need for this position is very well supported by the first four bullets of your Market Driven Factors section, namely Dairy (opportunities for cheese making), Cattle/ Grass Fed beef, Sheep, and Direct Marketing Opportunities and clearly would fit within the RES-A1 strategies group. A dedicated livestock professional who is able to bring the resources of WSU and the entire Land Grant system to work one-on-one with local livestock producers would go a long way to realizing the market opportunities you detailed in your report. As a specific example of the need for a faculty level position, I have been working with a local CSA mixed vegetable producer who wants to add grass-fed beef to his operation. He believes it will benefit his operation both economically and by incorporating it into his overall farm operation, he should see a net fertility benefit. Not only is there a need for general production expertise that a university faculty member could provide, but this examples demonstrates a need for someone who can help conduct on-farm research.

A second concern I have is with the Cultivating Success action item suggested under RES-A4. It is important to realize that the Cultivating Success program consists of **two** 12-week courses plus the potential for a large, hands-on internship and mentoring program that would tie very closely with the FarmLink program. For this program to realize its full potential and provide the economic return King County, it requires a dedicated FTE. While developing this program through our grant, we have already built partnerships with Green River Community College and SBDC. Like many programs developed and implemented by KCE, we partner with other agricultural professionals.

Finally, I think it is important to realize the KCE provides other educational and technical assistance programs that are jointly funding between WSU and King County. The County funding sources for these existing programs are at risk on an annual basis. It is crucial that stable funding is provided for these programs. As you are aware, King County and WSU have a unique relationship that allows for joint funding of WSU faculty, in which WSU is often able to provide benefits for new locally funded positions in addition to the 2/3rds of salary plus benefits WSU currently provides for existing faculty. This allows the County to realize an enormous benefit and a very low cost, often getting nearly five dollars back for each dollar invested in KCE.

Sincerely,

Brad Gaolach, Ph. D
Director, WSU King County Extension
206.205.3110. brad.gaolach@metrokc.gov
919 SW Grady Way, Suite 120
Renton, Washington 98155

Email from The Food Policy Council Coordinating Committee

SEATTLE/KING COUNTY FOOD POLICY COUNCIL Coordinating Committee

Paul Benz, Lutheran Public Policy Office
Branden Born, PhD, UW Urban Planning and Design
Mary Embleton, Cascade Harvest Coalition
Rosalinda Guillen, Food Justice Alliance
Sylvia Kantor, WSU King County Extension
Jen Lamson, Good Food Strategies
Pablo Monsivais, PhD, UW Dental Public Health and Nutritional Sciences
Tammy Morales
Linda Nageotte, CEO, Food Lifeline
Rebecca Warren, WSU Small Farms Program

For information contact:

Sylvia Kantor, WSU King County Extension
206-205-3131
sylvia.kantor@metrokc.gov

or

Mary Embleton, Cascade Harvest Coalition
206-632-0606
mary@oz.net

8 December 2005

Julia Larson, Coordinator
Rural Economic Strategies
Office of Business Relations and Economic Development
BOA-EX-2000
701 Fifth Avenue, Suite 2000
Seattle, WA 98104

Dear Julia,

As outlined in the draft report, the mission of the rural economic strategies is to advance the long term economic viability of the County's rural areas, with an emphasis on local farming (and forestry). As drafted, the Rural Economic Strategies report emphasizes on-going partnerships and projects that provide tools to support this mission. One glaring omission is the developing Seattle-King County Food Policy Council, which has the primary focus of developing a healthy, resilient local food system that would promote and ensure a healthy rural farming economy.

Over the last 2 years, the FPC has convened a diversity of stakeholders in the local food system, including farmers, grocers, health care professionals, planners and emergency food and nutrition experts from throughout the county.

Collaboration among a diverse group is essential for the purposes of promoting and ensuring the economic health of our rural areas. Furthermore, the economic health of rural areas is fundamentally linked to food and health-related issues throughout the county, in both rural and urban communities. That is why we are also working to develop creative, cost-effective, community-based approaches to enhance access to and consumption of fresh, wholesome, locally-produced food. These approaches include broad farm to table programs that get more local farm products into area schools, hospitals, institutions and other feeding programs and improved processing and marketing of local farm products. Strengthening our local food economy is integral to improving health and quality of life for all King County residents.

The efforts of the FPC have gained broad-based support. King County Executive Ron Sims endorsed the establishment of the Food Policy Council earlier this year. In fact, more than 60 organizations and individuals have endorsed the concept, including local farms, PCC, QFC, Federal Way Public Schools, Food Lifeline, the Seattle Neighborhood Farmers Market Alliance and Seattle chef Tom Douglas.

We urge you to recognize the FPC's role in promoting rural economies in the final Rural Economic Strategies report and look forward to expanding our current collaborative efforts throughout King County to create a vibrant, local food system.

Sincerely,

The Food Policy Council coordinating committee

Letter from Richard Bonewitz, Greater Maple Valley Area Council

GREATER MAPLE VALLEY AREA COUNCIL

P. O. Box 101

Maple Valley, Washington 98038

December 5, 2005

To: Julia Larson, Coordinator – Rural Economic Development Strategy
Office of Business Relations and Economic Development
701 Fifth Avenue, Suite 2000
Seattle, WA 98104-7097

Subject: Greater Maple Valley Area Council Comments to King County Draft Rural Economic Strategy

1. There is no real description of the problem that the County seeks to fix with the so-called “Rural Economic Strategies.” Consequently, there are no real strategies or action items detailed to solve them.
2. The document implies that a Rural Advisory Commission already exists when in fact it does not, nor has one been described in detail, nor has even the concept for one been presented to the affected public for review or comment.
3. The document is based in part upon morphing of the definition of “Rural Area” as described in King County Comprehensive Plan (KCCP) to include “Tourism and Recreation” and “Rural Cities” with equal status as the legitimate stakeholders of the Rural Areas. This violates the intent of KCCP R-105. Moreover this document overstates and misrepresents the importance of their economic relationship to the Rural Area. Tourism and Recreation as well as Rural Cities are much more focused on serving urban interests. With few exceptions, Rural Cities are nothing more, or less than, urban islands within a Rural Area. Please read the definition of Rural Area that is in KCCP R-101 through R-106 (and particularly R- 102) and reflect on the fact that King County has no legal authority over matters of land use within Rural Cities.
4. This document does not complete the action of KCCP R-106 as requested by the King County Council Growth Management/UAC Committee in a news release dated July 20, 2004 regarding “Proposed Amendments Comprehensive Plan Update Protect Character of Rural Areas, Working Farms and Forests.” Specifically, it makes no attempt to review/assess the regulations and programs designed to preserve the County’s Rural Area to determine whether they are still necessary, or overly restrictive, to the Rural Area economy. Nor does it address many of the components specified under R-106a, now R-107, or provide data of any note to respond to R-107 components: b, d, or e.
5. The document does not provide anything approaching a “Rough Order of Magnitude” (ROM) of the economic benefits of implementation. Yet it provides a comprehensive idea of the County labor costs for implementation. It identifies a baseline of 5 to 6 direct full time equivalent (FTE) personnel and implies significant internal (to the County) coordination, which can easily be envisioned to potentially mean an additional 5 to 6 FTE’s. County labor costs, including overhead and fringe benefits, could easily exceed more than \$1,000,000 per year for this project.

6. The document includes several egregiously inaccurate, or over hyped subjective statements, such as:
- a) “The amount of public involvement and the strength and enthusiasm of interest in a continuing dialogue has been remarkable.” See page 3, line 7 and contrast that with Appendix C, pages 53, 54, 55 and 56 which shows that the number of people that attended the three community meetings was 120, 24 of them County personnel. The total number of Rural Area people that showed up was far less than half of the 96 non-County people that showed up. This certainly doesn’t represent a “public majority” and, therefore, should not be construed as a wide-spread Rural Area endorsement nor concurrence with either the public outreach associated with the Rural Strategy initiative or this draft document.
 - b) The document says (Page 4) that many rural residents rely on home-based businesses for a living wage. However, it provides no data on how many are actually engaged in home-based businesses, and little data regarding how much they earn from their home-based businesses. Given the facts from the 2004 King County Annual Growth Report, page 117, that 135,000 people living in the Rural Area live in approximately 46,900 households; that their median earnings are approximately \$73,400 per year, including an average of \$2,559 from agriculture, (derived from the \$120,000,000 shown on page 3 of the draft Rural Economic Strategies Document divided by 46,900 households = \$2,559) and that on a household basis very little rural King County family income is derived from forestry. It is highly unlikely that the current economic value from other home-based businesses makes up a significant portion of the aforementioned \$73,400 per household income. Note: Commercial forests generate the most significant amount of income from forestry. Income from commercial forests is declining due to high U.S. labor costs and this income is mostly divided among stockholders scattered worldwide and not within King County. Further, small wood lots on average generate no income and if harvested would usually generate negative income, as well as increase environmental damage. The BOTTOM LINE is that Rural Area residents earn most of their income outside the Rural Area and no amount of business development activity by the County is likely to change Rural Area household income much, especially with the high degree of County regulation that presently exists. Most Rural Area citizens say that they would rather King County get out of their face and off their backs. This does not mean that no County support should be given to rural economic development; it means that the amount that the County spends should be limited by what is realistically achievable without compromising Rural Character. It also means that better data is needed before there is any additional spending on rural economic policy development.
 - c) This document says (Page 28) that: “The rural cities serve as the retail and finance centers for rural residents.” This statement is grossly over hyped. Most Rural Area citizens use the same retail and financial businesses that their urban friends use.
 - d) This document says (Page 29) that: “Data covering rural King County household income, family and the per capita income by city, Vashon Island and the County are shown in table 7. Similar data for

Unincorporated Rural King County was unavailable.” Note that this statement is not true. Summary household income data for the unincorporated Rural Area is shown on page 117 of King County’s Annual Growth Report. The authors of this document have elected to include only income data from Rural Cities. The purpose of the data presented in Tables 7 and 8 and the related data discussion in Section 4 of the document is questionable, since it only pertains to Rural Cities rather than the Rural Area, which is supposedly the subject of this strategy.

7. WE further believe that the “Covered” employment figures used in this document do not represent even half of the employment of the Rural Unincorporated Areas.
8. We note that the Office of Business Relations and Economic Development (BRED) excluded many important comments by the public in the three public meetings it conducted in Enumclaw, Vashon and Carnation, except for those comments that were asked for by BRED and made within its structured break-out groups. At the same it acknowledges that it held meetings and conversations with many groups and individuals elsewhere and has used information gained from these other meetings and discussions in producing this document. Yet several valuable comments were made in the meetings at Enumclaw, Vashon and Carnation that have been omitted from this document. For one example, this from Vashon: **“This process should be based upon a [Rural Area] community vision.”** Yet this draft strategy ignores the need for a Rural Area community vision as a planning strategy first step and basis for economic business development. We believe such community “visioning” is necessary to establish the basis of this document or any economic strategy initiative affecting the Rural Area and should yet be developed in “grass roots” fashion by Rural Area citizens (as Rural Area is presently defined in the King County Comprehensive Plan), not County officials and not outside interest groups. The process for developing such community “visions” needs to allow the Rural Area citizens to speak directly without filtering or County re-interpretation as to what businesses should be allowed and physically located in the Rural Area, as well as what limitations should be imposed to maintain the desired “Rural Character.”
9. BRED has not reviewed regulations and enforcement practices and made any recommendation to revise them as necessary to eliminate current conflicts and issues of code enforcement that threaten rural cottage industries that support rural “family wage jobs” and preserve that element of rural character as was directed by KCCP R-106, as part of any Rural Economic Strategy.
10. We also believe that a current inventory of Rural Area home-based businesses must be developed as was directed by KCCP- R107 and included as a part of any Rural Area Economic Strategy.
11. We also believe that the document should include a list of County policies, ordinances, Public Rules and operating practices that cover both permitting and enforcement actions relative to Rural Area businesses. This list should be assembled and reviewed and updated in public sessions between the County and Rural Area citizens and included in this document. Note: several people attending the three aforementioned Rural Area public meetings held by the County said that the County’s regulations and enforcement actions were the primary impediment to Rural Area businesses.

12. At best this is a draft plan that is clearly not ready to be released at this time, and one that would likely generate considerable negative reactions in the Rural Area.
13. We are recommending that the County not endorse this draft Rural Economic Strategy. The County should reduce the number of economic clusters to be covered in any subsequent Rural Economic Strategy to those physically (and typically) within the Rural Area as currently defined in the KCCP and produce a strategy based upon more specific and more accurate data or, alternatively, “kill” this project. It isn’t worth \$1,000,000 a year in County recurring costs to make socks and underwear more readily available to the Rural Area, or to create a supportable handful of mobile slaughtering facilities, portable sawmills, cheese and jelly stands, or shipping container kilns. If nothing else would make the costs of these potentially useful Rural Area businesses uneconomic, County regulations would likely kill them.
14. We are concerned that hidden beneath the Public Review Draft’s baroque and gratuitous formatting lies mischief and/or indifference, or both, and that this will lead to negative unintended consequences. The Executive and King County Council should reject this draft of the Rural Economic Strategy, amend regulations governing Home Occupations as intended by KCCP R-106 and enact a budget proviso to curtail 2006 expenditures to execute any part of this Rural Economic Strategy until our collective comments and suggestions are implemented as requested herein.

Sincerely,

Original signed by

Richard E. Bonewits, Chairman

Cc: Ron Sims, King County Executive
Ray Moser, King County Manager-Business Relations
Members of King County Council Growth Management/Unincorporated Areas
Committee Larry
Phillips, Dow Constantine, David Irons, Steve Hammond, Regan Dunn, Kathy
Lambert, Larry Gossett and Dwight Pelz

Email from Ewing Stringfellow

FROM: Ewing Stringfellow

DATE: December 5, 2005

TO: Julia Larson, Coordinator

Dear Ms. Larson,

This is a very thorough and lengthy report focusing on the protection of local farming and small forestry plots consistent with character of rural King County.

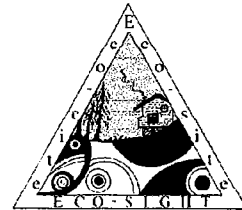
We are third generation cattle farmers in King County since 1949. Christmas tree growing has been a part of our operations for the past 26 years putting our three kids through the university and now we are working for our four grand children. One hundred percent of all tree sales go into an education trust fund payable to the university with their Dad taking care of the expenses. Now, in January 2006, King County plans to condemn through eminent domain our tree farm for a road project. King County does not want to consider the most direct road route because productive farm land is the cheapest land available in King County. If our land was not farmed it would be worth substantially more in weeds as investments property. This is how a farmer shoots himself in the foot and one way it does not pay to farm. Secondly, I would like to raise the question, Is farm land or park land more important to have in the county? There needs to be a better balance between these two uses. Farms are managed by folks who live on and work the land. They are known as stewards. Parks are managed by government. Both benefit the public, one through the food supply chain and the other through recreational activities. Both benefit the public by preserving a healthy rural environment. Here is a specific issue of concern. When the county condemns productive agricultural land for any public use reason, it should encourage the owner of the agricultural property it is taking to continue farming. The County should do this by offering what ever undeveloped land the County may own in the vicinity of the farm including passive park property as a comparable exchange in lieu of cash. There is thus no loss in productive agricultural land. When a willing farmer will accept such a land swap the County should cooperate and give this private involvement in agriculture its top priority. Please refer to the enclosed King County Agriculture Commission Minutes of October 2005 creating options for preserving lands, my November 30th, 2005 letter to the Snoqualmie Valley Record Editor recommending a land swap without losing the agricultural production of Christmas trees and a November 28th, 2005 letter to Linda Dougherty, Director of king County Road Services Division. I would suggest these thoughts be incorporated into your Rural Economic Strategies Report. Sincerely,

The Middle Fork S Ranch

Ewing Stringfellow

Queensborough Dev. Co., Inc.
101 West Olympic Place, #1
Seattle, WA 98119
Tel. (206) 284-1170
Fax. (206) 301-9773

December 6, 2005



Julia Larson, Coordinator
Rural Economic Strategies
Office of Business Relations and Economic Development
BOA-EX-2000
701 Fifth Avenue, Suite 2000
Seattle, WA 98104

Re: Rural Economic Strategies, Public Review Draft comment

Dear Ms. Larson: (Julia)

As you are aware, I have been asked by people engaged in economic activities ("Cottage industries") occurring on property zoned RA (rural area), and within unincorporated King County to continue to comment on this issue and your progress.

I am disappointed you decided not to return the many telephone calls I made to you on Monday November 5, 2005 regarding additional time for comments. Also, I wanted to discuss with you an effort to provide for better focused, and perhaps even a single response to the Rural Economic Strategies (public review draft) from the rural UAC's. I believe granting additional time and developing a collective effort would have reduced BRED's time and work in responding to the rural UAC's, individual "rural stakeholders", and presented other examples of well thought out non-confrontational communication from rural residents to King County.

The Public Review Draft came out on line on November 18th just in time for the Thanksgiving holidays, expecting good comments by December 6, 2005. You must admit: a document as large, baroque, and important as this one is difficult to absorb, discuss with others, and comment on in the time you have allowed. Nevertheless, here are my comments.

I concur with and adopt the comments and suggestions sent to you by Richard E. Bonewits, Chairman of the Greater Maple Valley Area Council. As noted, it is the product of a collective effort.

One of the things the Greater Maple Valley Area Council comment conveys is: the Rural Economic Strategies, "public review draft" is actually the product of an apparent and continuing staff driven agenda lacking any responsibility to King County's "rural" residents, GMA, County-wide Planning Policies, and/or the King County Comprehensive Plan. Another is: staff is insubordinate regarding the duty to adhere to and/or follow

legislative directives. (See Rural Economic Strategies, Public Review Draft @ P. 13, "B. The Process", first paragraph.)

Please review again my September 12, 2005 letter to you, as it is also part of this comment, remains unanswered, and is germane to the draft. The attachments included in my September 12, 2005 letter to you (No. 1, 2 and 3) provided the clarity you still need to emphasize. The "attachments" I included are King County generated documents that take up only three pages and you should be able to easily retrieve and provide them as part of "Appendix C" in your expected report to the King County Council.

BRED has not reviewed current code and/or enforcement practices and made any recommendations to revise the code to eliminate regulation(s) that create conflicts with GMA and/or creates enforcement issues that threaten rural cottage industries sustaining rural "family-wage jobs". It is essential to preserve this element of rural character as directed by KCCP R-106. As you know, on July 19, 2005 Karen Wolf assured the Growth Management and Unincorporated Areas Committee this would be done by December 31, 2005 as part of the Rural Economic Strategies report to the King County Council.

The Rural Economic Strategy Public Review Draft is a document without thumbs attempting to get as many fingers into the public tax pie chart as possible. It has little or no grasp on fundamental rural realities and hence, is flawed beyond repair. I believe hidden beneath the Public Review Draft's baroque and gratuitous formatting lies mischief and/or indifference or both.

The Executive and King County Council should reject the Rural Economic Strategy, amend regulations governing Home Occupations (cottage industries) as intended by R-106, and enact a budget proviso to curtail 2006 expenditures to execute any Rural Economic Strategy until R-106 is implemented.

Sincerely:



Paul P. Carkeek

Eco Site
PO Box 588
Preston Washington 98050
425-222-5662

cc: Ron Sims, King County Executive
Ray Moser, King County Manager-Business Relations, and all
Members of King County Council



Four Creeks Unincorporated Area Council

P.O. Box 3501
Renton, WA 98056
Four_Creeks_UAC@yahoo.com

December 9, 2005

Julia Larson, Coordinator – Rural Economic Development Strategy
Office of Business Relations and Economic Development
701 Fifth Avenue, Suite 2000
Seattle, WA 98104-7097

Subject: Four Creeks Unincorporated Area Council comments to the King
County Draft Rural Economic Strategy

Reference: King County Draft Rural Economic Strategy, dated November 18,
2005
Greater Maple Valley Area Council Comments to King County Draft
Rural Economic Strategy, dated December 5, 2005 (attached)

The Four Creeks Unincorporated Area Council (FCUAC) holds between 12 and 20 public meetings per year and represents approximately 13,000 voters in both rural and urban areas of King County. Based on public input from these and other meetings, input from the FCUAC constituents parallels the opinions expressed in the referenced Greater Maple Valley Area Council (GMVAC) comment letter on the Draft King County Rural Economic Strategy (RES) document. The following are additional comments or emphasis from the FCUAC.

Rural areas, by definition, are largely self-supporting with limited dependence on the surrounding urban areas. In fact, this independence is key to the character of rural areas. In order to maintain their independent lifestyle, rural residents must maintain the ability to supply most, if not all, of the necessities for food, shelter, and transportation. They need schools, doctors, lawyers, septic services and roof repair, as do the urban residents. In addition, rural residents reserve the right to cut their own lumber, build or repair their driveways and private roads, repair or even manufacture their own equipment and provide for transportation needs.

They must provide for the needs of farmers, lumberman, handymen, laborers, and housewives as well as their children. In summary, the rural lifestyle is often autonomous by design and definition.

This independence theme is not adequately addressed in the draft RES. For example, recreation and tourism, as described in the draft do not show an adequate connection to this goal. Also, from an urban perspective, cottage industries in the rural areas can be mistakenly viewed as suppliers for the surrounding urban areas. Although rural areas do support the surrounding urban areas, that is not their primary function. This vital concept, also related to rural independence, is inadequately addressed in the proposed strategy.

Additionally, there are concerns that the current earnings information related to home-based businesses described in the RES document is likely to be overstated, an inaccuracy which can lead to inappropriate conclusions regarding the need for changes in the policies, regulations, and practices that encourage growth in this type of business in the rural areas.

Finally, there are concerns regarding the difference between the definitions, intents, and visions for the rural areas contained in the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) and the actual economic-related policies, regulations, and practices being employed for these areas in King County. Evidence exists that the regulations currently being used to govern rural economic development were never intended to be applied to the rural area. These differences are not adequately addressed in the RES document.

The FCUAC firmly believes that the continuation of King County's current practices in the rural areas will, in fact, produce negative results never intended by the GMA and will lead to creating the new "suburbia for the 21st century" in King County. This draft of the Rural Economic Strategies inadequately addresses that important and urgent issue.

The FCUAC concurs with the GMVAC that the strategies and actions described in the RES document are, at best, a draft plan not ready to be released at this time. We further concur and adopt the GMVAC position that the County not endorse this RES at this point.

Sincerely,

Rick Spence, Four Creaks Unincorporated Area Council President
as directed by the council members by Unanimous Vote

cc: Richard E. Bonewits, Chairman Greater Maple Valley Area Council
Ron Sims, King County Executive
Ray Moser, King County Manager, Business Relations
Members of King County Council Growth Management/Unincorporated
Areas Committee Larry Phillips, Dow Constantine, David Irons, Steve
Hammond, Regan Dunn, Kathy Lambert, Larry Gossett and Dwight Pelz



Vashon-Maury Island Community Council

Serving Vashon-Maury Island since 1933



PO Box 281 Vashon, WA 98070

December 6, 2005

Julia L. Larson
Coordinator, Rural Economic Strategy
King County Office of Business Relations and Economic Development
King County Executive Office
BOA-EX-2000
701 5th Avenue, Suite 2000
Seattle, WA 98104-7097

SUBJ: Vashon-Maury Island Input to November 2005 Draft Rural Economic Strategy Document

Dear Ms. Larson:

First, we would like to thank you and your team for all the hard work, meetings and research that helped formulate this forward-thinking "Rural Economic Strategy." This should help not only Vashon Island but other rural communities in King County. Active implementation of the various economic strategies listed for Vashon will help direct growth to the urban areas, while reinforcing the much needed agricultural and forestry segments of our Island economy. Attached is a copy of applicable U.S. Census Bureau "Business Patterns by Major Industry" compiled by the Vashon-Maury Island Chamber of Commerce, which should provide a sense of scale and can serve as a frame of reference for future discussion.

Last month we highlighted the forestry and agricultural sectors at our monthly Community Council meeting. Forest Stewards, Vashon Island Growers Association and the Vashon Island Fruit Club each gave presentations. This was coordinated through the Chamber of Commerce and was very successful. Jobs, rural land use and an enhanced quality of island life are expected outcomes, not to mention great quality organic food. Does King County have any specific matrices that we can use to measure our progress?

Second, you might check with the Chamber of Commerce and Vashon College who already are developing a very comprehensive and interactive community Web site.

And finally, both the Community Council's Transportation and Economic Committees have been meeting. It is their and the Council's consensus opinion that the "Transportation" issue (specifically related to Washington State Ferries' schedules and rates) are integral components of Vashon's economic picture, and therefore need closer attention than reflected in the draft. As you can see from the attached "Commuters" schedule, a very significant portion of the island's economic well-being is governed by

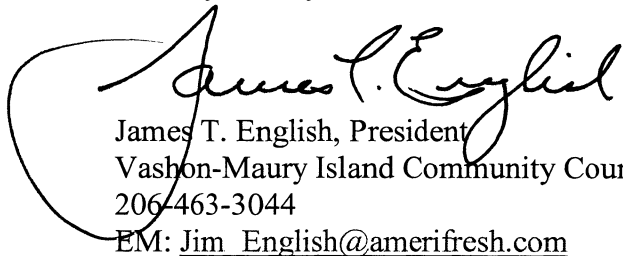
jobs off-island. We understand that this situation does not apply to the same extent to other Unincorporated Area Councils, and we are concerned that "transportation" as it relates to Vashon Island did not get the attention it warranted.

For example, the rural lifestyle is important to Vashon residents because of the quality of life it brings to our families. The increase in commuting times caused by service reductions, the extra time we spend at the bus stop, the problems we have with bus connections to the ferries, or waiting to get our car on a ferry, all threaten that quality of life.

Moreover, transportation directly affects the availability and cost of goods and services. Island businesses have been affected by service reductions, and now face the possibility of elimination of any ferry discounts currently offered to them as part of the proposed 2006 WSF tariff increase.

We would recommend that the King County Council lead in convening and preparing a special "Economic Transportation Impact Study" for Vashon Island that more completely addresses the very real impacts that Vashon's unique transportation difficulties and needs have on our Islands' rural economy.

Thank you for your favorable consideration.



James T. English, President
Vashon-Maury Island Community Council
206-463-3044
EM: Jim_English@amerifresh.com

Enclosures:

Business Patterns
Daily Commuter Ferry Patterns

To: Julia Larson
King County Office of Business Relations & Economic Development
701 Fifth Avenue
Suite 2000
Seattle, Wa 98104-7097

Dear Ms. Larson,

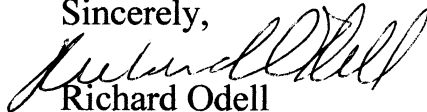
These signatures were gathered at the Vashon Farmers' Market this past Saturday, December 10. As a board member and past president of the Vashon Island Growers Association, as well as a grower and market vendor for 14 seasons, I have seen the market develop from a small plywood booth to a covered, open air mall with crowds that won't go home.

The people of Vashon-Maury Island by and large have strong feelings for what *they* feel is *their* market, and by extension for the ever-increasing number of farmers who supply its food and flowers.

As a vendor, I've spent a large part of every Saturday talking to tourists who have made the market an important stop during their visit.

Be assured that your efforts to support farming on Vashon-Maury Island will be warmly regarded by farmer and resident alike.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Richard Odell', written in black ink.

Richard Odell

P.O. Box 1448

Vashon, Wa. 98070

To: Julia Larson
King County Office of Business Relations & Economic
Development
701 Fifth Avenue
Suite 2000
Seattle, Wa 98104-7097

Dear Ms. Larson:

Please continue to keep small farms a priority in determining strategies for the economic future of rural King County.

We want small farms to continue to play an increasing role in the economic life of Vashon-Maury Island, through the ever-growing supplies of food produced for local markets, the income provided to farming families and others, and the growing amount of tourist interest generated by farm tours and the local Farmers' Market.

Thank you for your time and support.

Michael Laurie	13470 108th Ave SW, Vashon
Wally L. V. Cole	10035 SW 125th Pl Vashon, WA
Mary Lou Guelandor	13518 SW 186th St. Vashon 98070
Bette Krumholz	26022 Pillsbury Rd SW Vashon
Julia S. Baker	10555 SW 140th Vashon
Julie Abbey	23145 Vashon Hwy SW, Vashon 98070
Harry Rosenthal	101006 S B and 98070
Michelle Hany	12216 SW Cove Vashon 98070
Scott Johnson	12216 SW Cove 20 Vashon 98070
Karen English	10528 SW 238th St. Vashon 98070
Mary Ormstead	17717 94th Ave SW Vashon 98070
Jane Neubauer	15635 115th Ave SW Vashon 98070.
Julia Hamlin	12704 SW 204th St

To: Julia Larson
King County Office of Business Relations & Economic Development
701 Fifth Avenue
Suite 2000
Seattle, Wa 98104-7097

Dear Ms. Larson:

Please continue to keep small farms a priority in determining strategies for the economic future of rural King County.

We want small farms to continue to play an increasing role in the economic life of Vashon-Maury Island, through the ever-growing supplies of food produced for local markets, the income provided to farming families and others, and the growing amount of tourist interest generated by farm tours and the local Farmers' Market.

Thank you for your time and support.

Marilyn Sandall	6907 57 th Ave NE Seattle 98115
Deena Cher	PO BOX 13477 Burien 98013
PTC HEATHER TIMKEN	PO Box 596 VASHON, WA 98070
Margaret Hoefel	10421 SW Bank Rd #18 Vashon 98070
Ann Boggess	16530 91 st Ave SW Vashon 98070
Janet	10221 Cemetery Rd
Eric Durrett	6002 SW Pt. Robinson Rd, Vashon 98070
Richard Odell	10539 SW 186 th Pl Vashon, WA 98070
Suzanne Craft	19120 Ridge Rd SW Vashon, WA 98070
Michelle Moschkan	25120 122nd Ave SW, Vashon, WA 98070
Debbie Cain	11716 98 th Pl SW Vashon, WA 98070
Daniel Cain	11716 98 th Pl SW Vashon WA 98070
Erica Assink	9803 SW 239 th St Vashon, WA 98070
Cindy Follock	15639 115 th Ave SW, Vashon, WA 98070
Linda Peterson	15305 Vashon Hwy S.W. 98070
GEORGE PAGE	10730 SW 116 th St Vashon WA 98070
Margaret Hansen	70 Box 290 Vashon, WA 98070
Ronald C. Bowman	12531 NE 30 th St BLU, WA 98005
Karen Barringer	26227 99 th Ave SW Vashon 98070

This letter composed and distributed the Vashon Island Growers Assoc.


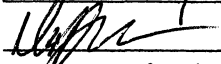
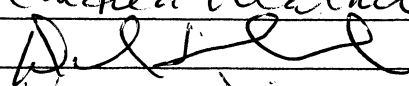
To: Julia Larson
King County Office of Business Relations & Economic Development
701 Fifth Avenue
Suite 2000
Seattle, Wa 98104-7097

Dear Ms. Larson:

Please continue to keep small farms a priority in determining strategies for the economic future of rural King County.

We want small farms to continue to play an increasing role in the economic life of Vashon-Maury Island, through the ever-growing supplies of food produced for local markets, the income provided to farming families and others, and the growing amount of tourist interest generated by farm tours and the local Farmers' Market.

Thank you for your time and support.


Susan Gardner

Inger Bruckman
KRIS Thompson
Wesley Rodgers
Carmen Webb
Julia Davis
Dana J. Hill
Maudia Kaye
Susan Madden
Ordy Koyen
Janet Clumby
Dayna Romero
Cheryl Gray
Marty Elliott
Cynthia Walker

David Sider

10421 Sun Bank Rd H17 Vashon WA 98070
14720 107th Wy SW Vashon
PO Box 258 Vashon 98070
14020 GLEN ACRES RD VASHON 98070
10730 SW 116th St Vashon WA 98070
P.O. Box 1976 Vashon
21605 111th Ave SW Vashon WA 98070
" " "
23915 Landing Rd SW 98070
11516 103rd Ave SW 98070
PO Box 617 Vashon 98070
1119 Grand Sea 98122
30523 111th SW 98070
Box 33, 17506 100th Ave, 98070
10528 SW 238th Vashon, 98070
9811 SW Quartermaster Vashon 98070
17508 - 107th Ave SW Vashon.
21917 131st Pl SW Vashon
10323 SW 156th Vashon 98070

This letter composed and distributed the Vashon Island Growers Assoc.

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King County Office of Business Relations & Economic Development
701 Fifth Avenue
Suite 2000
Seattle, Wa 98104-7097

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Thank you for your time and support.

Emily Pinkman
Linda Coe
Karen Kinsley
Shane Jewell
Vase Grove
Jen Coe
Memilee Bunyan
May Lombard
Claudine Kim-Murphy
Rica Motoyoshi
Rebecca George
K. Jones
J. A. Math
Barbara Ford
M. L. Bass
Mark Mueck
John M. Roberts
P. J. K. K. K.
Misalque Matias

20020 107th Ave SW, Vashon, WA 98070
17718-115th Ave SW, Vashon WA
13470 - 133rd SW Vashon WA
20020 107th Ave SW, Vashon, WA
11422 SW Cedar Rd Vashon 98070
7316 SW 240th Vashon WA 98070
20406 Chautauqua Beach Rd SW Vashon 98070
13632 SW 226th Vashon, WA 98070
8126 SW 204th St Vashon
27712 - 140 Ave SW Vashon 98070
20323 1/2 Chautauqua Beach Rd Vashon 98070
28407 99th Ave SW VASHON 98070
PO Box 406 Vashon 98070
PO 717 Westside Hwy SW Vashon
14105 SW 240th St Vashon 98070
10421 SW Brook Rd #2 Vashon WA 98070
28521 137th SW VASHON 98070
28521 137th SW Vashon 98070
PO Box 406 Vashon WA 98070

This letter composed and distributed the Vashon Island Growers Assoc.

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APPENDIX E: King County Letters of Support

This Appendix contains the letters that King County sent in support of rural residents and their agricultural activities in King County.

Ron Sims
King County Executive
701 Fifth Avenue, Suite 3210 Seattle, WA 98104
206-296-4040 Fax 206-296-0194 TTY Relay: 711 www.metrokc.gov

May 26, 2005

Merritt D. Long,
Chairman Washington
State Liquor Control
Board PO Box 3075
Olympia, W A 98504

Dear Chairman Long:

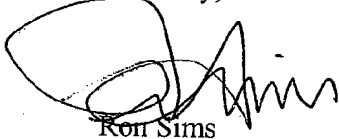
King County supports granting the winery license #08720-6A to Rockridge Orchards in the Enumclaw area. Rockridge Orchards is a well established and respected farming operation in King County and throughout the region. Wade and Judy Bennett, farmers and owners, have worked hard to identify new markets and new enterprises to keep their farm viable. Their entrepreneurship and good stewardship practices have served as a model for many farmers throughout the region.

Agricultural lands and farming provide valuable open space, quality of living, and fresh nutritious food to local citizens and the region. The County has taken a leadership role with respect to preserving, protecting and promoting local agriculture. In 1985, the County established Agricultural Production Districts (APDs) with large lot zoning and specified agriculture as the preferred use in these areas. Development regulations allow necessary infrastructure to support commercial agriculture. Specifically, the County recognizes the importance of adding value to farm products through processing, packaging and selling them directly to the consumer as a way to keep agriculture viable in an urban landscape. With this in mind, the County amended its 2004 Comprehensive Plan to allow for wineries and breweries to be developed in the APDs. In addition, Rockridge Orchards has been granted all applicable land use permits by the County for this activity.

Rockridge Orchards is located in the Enumclaw APD where value-added enterprises are supported and encouraged. The winery will be a valuable addition to the existing farming operations and will give consumers access to a diversity of new local products. This will help to sustain not only the farming operation but the other valuable economic, environmental and cultural benefits it generates as well. If you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact Steven Evans, Project Program Manager of the Water and Land Resources Division in the Department of Natural Resources and Parks, at 206-296-7824.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ron Sims', written over a circular stamp.

Ron Sims
King County Executive

King County is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer and complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act

From: Exec.Sims@metrokc.gov

Sent: Friday, June 10, 2005 5:12 PM

To: 'amsdairycomments.@usda.gov'

Cc: 'senate_murray@murray.senate.gov'; 'maria_cantwell@cantwell.senate.gov'; 'adam.smith@mail.house.gov'; ZZGrp, Council Members; 'alexiskoester@msn.com'; Northcroft, George

Subject: Agricultural Marketing Service, 7CFR Parts 1124 and 1131; Docket No. AO-368-A32, AO-271-A37; DA-03-04B

June 10, 2005

To Whom It May Concern:

We are writing to express our strong opposition to the proposed regulatory change identified as **Agricultural Marketing Service, 7 CFR Parts 1124 and 1131 – Docket No. AO-368-A32, AO-271-A37; DA-03-04B.**

If enacted, this change would negatively impact dairy operations that produce, process, and market milk from their own dairy cows on their own farms, commonly referred to as producer-handlers. We understand that this change would only apply to producer-handlers in the Washington/Oregon and Arizona/Las Vegas Milk Marketing Areas producing three million or more pounds per month; and that none of the other Milk Marketing Areas in the nation have implemented this requirement.

Smith Brothers Farms has operated in King County for 85 years, employs 110 people and contracts with 61 independent drivers to deliver milk to 40,000 homes and 14 local school districts. Its market niche is home delivery of reasonably-price milk that is free of growth hormones. Larger processors and cooperatives, because they buy milk from a variety of sources, cannot guarantee growth hormone-free milk and rely on large chain stores to sell their milk rather than provide home delivery.

If the proposed regulatory change is enacted, Smith Brothers will be required to ostensibly sell its milk to a regional cooperative at the pooled (average) price of four different classes of milk. Then, because Smith Brothers processes and sells its milk as Class One (fluid or beverage) milk, the highest-priced milk, the company will be required to ostensibly buy it back at the higher Class One price.

While this is purely an accounting transaction with no milk actually changing hands, it would have devastating effects on Smith Brothers. Based on the company's current production volume, the difference between the pooled price it would receive and the repurchase price it would pay is about \$150,000 monthly, or \$1,800,000 annually. According to the company, this would exceed its annual net profits and require it to drastically reduce its current operations, including selling assets and eliminating jobs. And the money taken directly from Smith Brothers' net profits would subsidize its competition -- larger, more inefficient processors.

King County has made a significant investment in preserving farmland for agriculture. Today, there are approximately 42,000 acres of land devoted to farming; a number that has stabilized in recent years. We are currently focusing on helping existing and future farmers maintain and operate their farms. And, we believe that the future of farming in King County will be based mainly on small family-run farms who sell their products directly to the consumer.

Smith Brothers is a small producer-handler dairy, one of few such companies remaining in an industry rapidly being concentrated in larger and larger cooperatives and processors. As businesses like Smith Brothers cease operations, competition and consumer choice are reduced and jobs are lost. Many economic studies over the last few decades have decisively shown that small businesses are the principal generators of jobs in this country, not the big conglomerates.

We urge you not to artificially constrain competition and consumer choice by implementing this rule change, particularly when it would only apply to a total of four producer-handlers in the nation. Please allow the marketplace, the foundation of our economic system, to determine the success or failure of Smith Brothers and similar businesses.

Sincerely,

Ron Sims
King County Executive

Larry Phillips
Chair, King County Council

cc: The Honorable Patty Murray, United States Senator, State of Washington
The Honorable Maria Cantwell, United States Senator, State of Washington
The Honorable Adam Smith, 9th Congressional District Representative, State of Washington
King County Councilmembers
Alexis Koester, President, Smith Brothers Farms, Inc.
George Northcroft, King County Office of Business Relations and Economic Development